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PART I.

THE BONDAGE.

THE GREAT EXODUS, &c.

PART I.—THE BONDAGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE STUDY OF PROPHECY : ITS USE AND ABUSE.

THE brute never anticipates the future. Provided the stall of the ox is filled for the passing day, he concerns not himself about to-morrow. The present hour is the whole horizon of his existence. The past is gone from him, and the future exists not. The eternal night hems him in on all sides.

But with man how different ! It is his distinctive and glorious prerogative to foresee and to forecast. From his stand-point in time what noble vistas open into the vast immensity that surrounds him ! Behind, before, and on every side, there rise before his eye scenes of surpassing grandeur. Yonder, in the past, is this “wondrous ball” of earth, emerging from old chaos, and the starry host climbing for the first time the arch

of the sky. And there, in the future, seen across the ages, are the new heavens and the new earth, rising grandly over the fallen thrones of tyranny and the prostrate shrines of superstition. Already the mighty shout with which the sons of God will welcome the new creation falls upon our ear.

To recall the past, and to anticipate the future, is a God-implanted faculty. It is part of that image in which man was made. The great **I AM** stretches his wondrous and infinite being alike over the past, the future, and the present. Man, according to the measure of his faculties, and after the manner of his progressive existence, may be said also to "inhabit eternity." He is the heir of the future. Is it wonderful, then, that he should attempt to penetrate his dread and unspeakably solemn inheritance? Is it wonderful that he should put the future to the question, as it were, and seek to make it disclose, although dimly and afar off, those scenes of terror and of grandeur which it will yet unfold clearly and at hand, and in the very midst of which man knows the lapse of ages will one day place him? The instinct that prompts man thereunto is an essential part of his humanity. Have not all nations almost had their prophecies of the future? Has not poetry everywhere shown an irrepressible tendency to grow into prophecy? In the groves of Greece as in the vales of Judah, on the Roman Capitol as on the hill of Zion, has not the muse gone forth into coming ages for her grandest themes? Were not some of the finest odes of classic antiquity

descriptive of that golden age for which the world looked even amid the gloom of Paganism ?

Now, the Bible gratifies every true feeling of the heart. And accordingly, in the Word of God there are two whole books of Prophecy,—the Book of Daniel, and the Revelation of John. These we may liken to two parallel lines. They run on to the very frontier of the Millennium,—nay, all through its many blissful ages,—and terminate only where time itself terminates,—at the gates of eternity.

These two lines are mutually expository. Where the one is obscure the other is clear ; and where the one carefully eschews detail, the other is as careful to be full and particular. Like certain inventions of modern art, these two prefigurations, put side by side, blend harmoniously, and form but *one* picture, one grand and triumphant future. They open to the Church's eye a vast perspective, crowded throughout with the majestic monuments of the power, the wisdom, and the love of her great Head. These are the predestined goings of her God ; the footsteps of her mighty King ; the triumphal pathway along which the chariot of Emmanuel is to advance to the sovereignty of the universe. When man had crossed the threshold of his Eden, it became henceforward and for ever an interdicted territory to him. Where his steps had been but a moment before, there now burned the flaming sword. But the sentence that closed the gate of one paradise opened the door of another. The same hour which saw the sword of doom takes up its station be-

hind man, saw the star of Prophecy rise before him. The one sternly forbade him to go back ; the other graciously beckoned him forwards. It centred all his hopes in the future ; and held forth a blessed assurance that, should he prosecute the road on which he had now entered, and keep steadily in his eye that shining light that burned over yonder distant portal, he should find at the end of his way a fairer paradise than that at whose closed door mighty cherubim now kept watch. But if it became man's duty to seek the future, it became not less his duty to study it. Prophecy is as little an interdicted territory as is that paradise towards which the curse and the promise, the sword behind and the star before, unite in urging man's steps. In this path there stands no flaming sword ; over this threshold there frowns no anathema. A benediction, like a star of blessed light, shines above the portal, and invites man to enter. The opening words of the Apocalypse are, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they who hear, the words of this prophecy."

But nowhere are wisdom and caution more necessary. Here, if anywhere, it behoves man to take the shoe off his foot. To foretell the future is the prerogative of God alone. Not less is it God's exclusive prerogative to interpret the future. In truth, Prophecy can never be clearly and satisfactorily understood till the finger of Providence has unveiled what the voice of Prophecy had announced. Man's humble part is to sit down, and, by an attentive and patient comparison

of the two, to seek to understand what the spirit of Prophecy did signify, when He spake in old time of the things that were to come to pass hereafter. Such a task, it is true, is but little fitted to gratify man's pride : it is the only task, nevertheless, for which he is competent. If, from *interpreting Prophecy*, he shall fall to *prophesying*, it is not difficult to foretell the result : he will wander from light into darkness.

Not a little discredit has been brought upon the study of Prophecy by those who have not known the principles on which to conduct it, and the limits within which to confine it. There have been interpreters of Prophecy who have substituted their own guesses in the room of sober deductions from the Divine Word. They have put aside Providence as the interpreter of Prophecy, and so have cut in sunder what God had joined. But what branch of true knowledge is it which has not suffered from the same error ? There was a time when the astronomer was confounded with the astrologer, and when the sublime and truthful deductions of the one science met the same condemnation as the empirical arts and impious conclusions of the other. But though the astrologer watched the constellations with the foolish and mischievous purpose of being able therefrom to foretell the death of individuals, the fall of monarchs, and the dissolution of kingdoms, that was no reason why the astronomer should not study the heavens, in order thence to deduce the true order of the universe, and ascertain the laws on which are founded the use

ful art of navigation and the important science of geography. Both were interpreters of the sky ; but the interpretations of the one were founded on theories of his own devising, while the interpretations of the other proceeded on a patient observation of nature. The results at which the one arrived were delusive and pernicious ; the conclusions of the other were as useful as they are brilliant.

Chemistry was long confounded with alchemy. The vain pursuit of the philosopher's stone, by which all things were to be transmuted into gold, imparted its deserved odium to the legitimate and beneficent labours of the chemist. But wisdom is justified of her children. Despite the retorts and crucibles of the alchemist,—despite his cabalistic spells,—the philosopher's stone still remains undiscovered, while the truer methods and soberer expectations of the chemist have been crowned with a rich harvest of success. The manufactures that enrich our country, the improved husbandry that fertilizes our soil, the arts that adorn life, are largely the product of the patient and persevering experiments of the chemist. It would seem a law almost, that the impostor comes first, and the true worker last.

Prophecy, then, has fared but as other branches of knowledge have fared. Many there be who frown upon the study of it, and reject its conclusions summarily and at once ; holding that these conclusions must necessarily be uncertain, visionary, chimerical, and void of real instruction, and that they are only fitted to draw

men away from the sober study of the Word, and the sober discharge of duty. But such ought to discriminate. No one now denies the truth of astronomy, or the utility of its study, because of the delusions of astrology. And neither ought we to question the utility of the study of Prophecy, or the truth of its conclusions in the main, because expositions rash, unfounded, and even mischievous, have sometimes been given as true. As the shadow cannot possibly exist unless there first be the substance, and as the false religions of the world could never have arisen unless there first had been the true, so these counterfeit expositions of the prophetic oracles could scarce have existed unless there had been at the same time a true and legitimate study of Prophecy. The error of the astrologer did not lie in that he studied the stars, but in that he studied them for wrong ends. He sought to extort from them what they were never intended to reveal. Similar has been the error of not a few interpreters of Prophecy. They have studied it with the view of learning secrets which Prophecy was never intended to teach. Let their example warn us to shun their mistake. Let us not seek to bring more out of Prophecy than Prophecy was intended to convey. Prophecy was never meant to make us know the precise *form* of future events, but their *general* shape and their *moral* complexion. Prophecy was never meant to enable us to say, on such a day and year of the future such an event will take place; but rather to indicate the general length of the great epochs destined

to pass over the Church, and to awaken expectation and excite intelligent inquiry, when the time should draw nigh for the passing away of one epoch and the opening of another. Prophecy especially was intended to point the Church's eye to the dawn after her night,—her approaching day of rest and dominion,—lest her patience should tire, and her hope give up the ghost, ere the morning watch had come. Above all, Prophecy was meant to unfold the great principles embodied in particular epochs, and to lay a foundation for the Church's faith, in the perfect equity, inflexible righteousness, omnipotent power, and unfailing love, of her Great Head.

Is it for these ends we study Prophecy? Do we seek to know principles rather than events? Are we desirous of learning lessons, rather than of fixing dates? If so, then we shall find Prophecy a field in which lie hid treasures of inestimable price, whose value will amply repay all the pains we may bestow upon the search for them. Prophecy, studied with these views, will be to us a true Apocalypse,—a real unveiling of the Godhead,—an unveiling of Him in the glories of his Person, in the wisdom of his Purposes, and in the steady and resistless progression of his Providence towards the final and glorious triumph of his Church.

But how shall a child of dust declare the purposes of the Omnipotent? He took not counsel with us. We were not present in the secret chamber of the Eternal when He arranged his plans and settled the order of his majestic footsteps. The thoughts of God

are, like God himself, "a great deep." Even those sons of the mighty, those ancients in bliss, who stand before the throne of the Eternal Majesty, and see the face of God, are not able to embrace the gigantic amplitude of the eternal purposes, nor can they conceive the full grandeur of that consummation to which they are tending. How shall we who dwell on earth presume to do this? No. We only dare cast a reverent glance at that twofold revelation which God has been pleased to give us, first, in the symbols of his Word, and, second, in the acts of his providence. We do not dogmatize. The Bible shuts up its glorious meaning from the man who approaches it in a spirit of vain confidence, or who attempts to fathom it by the potency of mere human erudition. To such an one its plainest intimations become dark; how much more its apocalyptic foreshadowings! We must become as a little child, that we may enter into these august meanings. The Lord is passing by in those mighty upturnings which appertain to the finishing of "the mystery" and the revelation of "His kingdom;" and the position which becomes us is that of Elijah in the cave's mouth, who wrapped his face in his mantle before that "unseen Presence," whose ministers—fire, earthquake, and mighty wind—scattered the mountains, and made the perpetual hills to bow.

CHAPTER II.

STUDY OF PROPHECY : REFORMATION AND GERMAN
SCHOOLS.

THE Reformation Church early devoted herself to the study of the prophetic page. It was natural she should. No sooner has the mariner freed himself from the skirts of some dense fog, which had shut out sea and sky from his sight, than his first glance is at the stars. With the return of light he endeavours to ascertain his exact place on the ocean. The Church at the Reformation had just escaped from the darkness which had so long enveloped her from the Papal abyss ; and her first effort, by the help of Prophecy, was to ascertain her position on the chart of time. Lifting her eyes to the firmament of revelation, she began reverently to read the great lights of Prophecy. Knox struck the key-note in his famous sermon at St Andrew's. His practical and sagacious mind, aided by the Divine Spirit, saw the exact identity betwixt the features of the Harlot as portrayed in Prophecy, and her features as portrayed in the facts of history. From the visions of Patmos he turned his eye upon the events of Europe, and he said, this is the Power which John saw coming

up out of the abyss. He pronounced the Church of Rome to be the Antichrist of the Apocalypse. In this canon of criticism, Knox, as it appears to us, fixed what must ever remain the fundamental dogma in all sound apocalyptic interpretation. He determined at the same time the only legitimate method by which interpreters of the Apocalypse must proceed, if they would arrive at a sound result. He did not shut his eye and set about constructing theories: he went forth into the field of history, and observed facts. He showed the true Baconian method before Bacon existed; and he said to all who would follow him in the work of interpreting Prophecy, as Bacon afterwards said to all who sought to follow him in the work of interpreting nature,—this, even the inductive method, is the road by which you must travel.

This, too, was Calvin's path. His great intellect humbly accepted the providence of God as the sure interpreter of the prophetic Word of God. He knew that the providence of God in time is but the realization of his purpose from everlasting. Midway between the purpose and the performance stands the prophecy. It is the link that binds the two together. It is put there to be a proof of God's omniscience, and a ground of hope to the Church. But till the performance has taken place, the purpose cannot be known. In the light of the performance, and in it alone, do both the prophecy and the purpose stand unveiled. Till it has come, no man is able to open the seal that is upon the prophecy, or to unlock the everlasting doors that con-

ceal the purpose. Even the Holy Spirit does not disclose either to the mind, with certainty at least, till the event has realized them. This is humbling to man's pride, who fain would know, by dint of his own fertile ingenuity and searching penetration, what God has purposed, and when and how He will bring it to pass. But no ; he must be content to wait with patience, and to observe with docility and reverence. This is the true Baconian method, which has been so prolific of grand results in other departments of truth. It was applied by our Reformers to the interpretation of the Sacred Oracles at large, and of their prophetic portions in particular, even before it had been applied by Bacon to the interpretation of nature.

Calvin and Knox, then, may be regarded as in post-reformation times the founders of this method of interpreting the Apocalypse. A host of men, illustrious by their learning, their talents, and their piety, have followed in their steps. Their combined labours, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, have resulted in giving to Apocalyptic interpretation, as it appears to us, the dignity of a science. The laws of symbolization have to a large extent been examined and fixed. The method of computing prophetic time has been determined. A great multitude of facts, bearing on fulfilled prophecy, have been accumulated, and now form so many data to guide us in our interpretation of what remains as yet unfulfilled. Above all, the hand of God has been rolling back the curtain from the future, and the evolutions of history have been translating into fact the sym-

bols of Prophecy. We have thus had afforded us opportunities of testing the truth of our principles, and of rectifying our errors. The great landmarks of the study have been determined with tolerable precision and distinctness. Thus has the collective mind of the Reformation Church established the great principles applicable to the right interpretation of the prophetic portion of the Word of God. If the study has attained, as we hold it has, to the rank of a science,—if it possesses anything of the harmony of parts, the beauty of proportion, and the unity and consistency, which belong to a system,—this is owing to the patience, the sagacity, and the laboriousness of our great predecessors, under the superintending influence of that blessed Spirit whose light they sought, and whose glory they aimed at promoting. The principles these men have established no one is at liberty to disregard. The philosopher who should ignore the discoveries of Bacon and Newton, and of all the illustrious cultivators of science which have flourished during the past two hundred years,—who should begin by discarding the law of gravitation, for instance, or of the earth's motion,—in so doing would display, not his superior wisdom, but his conspicuous folly. We hold it an error equally grave to begin to interpret Prophecy by ignoring the labours of former interpreters, on whose prayerful and laborious investigations God has set the seal of His approval. The foundations of the science of prophetic interpretation are not now to be laid. Three hundred years has the Church been occupied in this

work ; and the result is, that Prophecy is no longer a sealed book.

After what we have said, it is hardly necessary to remark, that the system of interpretation which we adopt is the Reformation one, in contradistinction to the German one. The difference betwixt these two systems of interpretation is considerable. The one had its rise, as its name imports, three centuries ago ; the other is comparatively of yesterday, having come into being in our own times. The one is strongly marked by the intellectual character of the Reformation and the Reformers. It is thoroughly practical ; it deals with great verities ; it brings all its conclusions to the test of fact ; and, as we have already remarked, it is the creation of the slow but sure Baconian method. The other scheme of interpretation bears as unmistakeably the mental lineaments of Germany. It is subtile ; it is highly abstract ; it eschews dates and facts ; and sublimates Prophecy into a vague foreshadowing of certain sentiments and opinions that were hereafter to prevail in the Church and the world. As face answereth to face in water, so did the theology of the Reformers answer to the wants of man's heart and the facts of man's condition. Like to their theology was their scheme of Prophecy. It answered, as face to face, the facts of history. The image of Prophecy, as they expounded it, was seen to be pictured on the living page of history. The Reformers maintained inviolable the grand connection between the Purpose, the Prophecy, and the Providence of God.

In the hands of the Germans this connection is broken up, or at least is not traceable. History, according to them, is not the complement of Prophecy. The Apocalypse, in their view, has no reference to any distinct and organized society, but to false principles or erroneous systems.

The difference betwixt these two schools may be expressed in two words,—*subjectivity* and *objectivity*. The Germans present us with a scheme of interpretation which is strictly subjective. According to them, the Apocalypse describes a certain process or evolution of thought which was to take place in the ecclesiastical mind of Christendom. In accordance with this theory, they look not beyond the book itself for its interpretation. They spurn the patient and laborious inductive method, and adopt the easier and summary mode of unfolding, by an effort of thought, the whole meaning of the book. They do not need to wait till events shall fulfil it. Events can shed no light upon it. They can bring not a particle of help to an interpreter. The meaning of the book is to be known from the book itself. It may be read even now, provided the thought brought to bear on its exposition be profound enough. Nay, for anything we can see, on the German scheme the Apocalypse might have been interpreted as soon as it was given, had there existed a genius subtile enough and bold enough to guess the precise process of thought which it foreshadows.

On the Reformation scheme, on the contrary, the Apocalypse is an objective book. The interpreter who

would rightly read it must look outside the book itself. It is an actual drama of living events to occur on the stage of the world. To that stage must you go, therefore, to find the real solution. On the German scheme, it is not Providence which reveals the Apocalypse to its interpreter ; it is the interpreter who reveals it to himself and to the world. His sagacity opens the seal, lifts the veil, and brings its hidden meaning into light. On the Reformation scheme, it is God which reveals it. Light is flashed upon scene after scene of this symbolic drama, just as the real drama of history proceeds ; and to man is left only the humble task of accepting the interpretation which Providence gives. Keeping in view that the one scheme of interpretation is subjective, and that the other is objective, we proceed to state the following considerations.

On the Reformation scheme, Prophecy is the philosophy of history ; it is the key that admits us into the arcana of Providence ; it places us in the midst of great verities ; nay, it places us behind the scenes, and shows us these verities in their origin, in their order, and in their progression. It permits man, whose short lifetime makes him the witness of only a small portion of the actual drama, to behold, under the veil of symbol, the whole series, from the first incipient act which eludes his eye, to the great crowning event which fills a world and fixes the gaze of nations. The German scheme, in our opinion, is not nearly so instructive, for it embraces not properly entities or facts, but abstract opinions, more or less false and noxious ;

not cleaving, in particular, to any one Church, but floating about, and manifesting themselves in all,—in some to but a small, in others to a much larger extent. In short, the Apocalypse, according to this view, has respect to the modicum of falsehood which may be found in the most evangelical Church on earth, as well as to that terrible combination and concentration of error which forms the Church of Rome. On the contrary, what the great men of the Reformation era saw in the Apocalypse was not abstract, unattached, disembodied error, but a living and incarnated system of iniquity. In the Harlot sitting on the scarlet-coloured beast, and holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, they saw, not the spirit of falsehood wandering without visible shape, and with inaudible steps, over the earth, but the organized apostacy of Rome, upheld by the political power which it controlled, and which it instigated to deeds of blood. Is it rash in us to follow the men of the Reformation era ? Do we, in treading in their steps, abandon ourselves to questionable guidance ? They eminently enjoyed the aid of God's Spirit in the discovery of truths long hidden in other parts of revelation. Is it presumptuous to infer that they enjoyed, in something like the same measure, the Divine aid in the interpretation of the prophetic portion of Holy Writ ? That it was given to them to see to the end of these things, and fully to uplift the veil, we are far from asserting. In their days, the decree had not yet exhausted its force, or run its appointed period, —“ But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal

the book, even to the time of the end." Still, that book, though "sealed," was so far opened to them that they knew that Rome was its great subject. They could see in its symbols the image of her past grandeur and power; they could track her bloody foot-prints as history afterwards tracked them; and they could see also, though more dimly, the gathering darkness of her coming doom. So far the Reformers felt they could not possibly be mistaken. The likeness was too truthfully portrayed and too sharply defined to permit of their applying it to any but one system which had ever been known in history. But the outline which they sketched they left to be filled up by those who were to come after them. In the path which they were the first in modern times to open, we are content to follow.

We strongly feel, moreover, that the German scheme of prophetic interpretation greatly weakens the proof of the divinity of the Bible arising from Omnipotence. That it destroys it we should not say; but undoubtedly it much enfeebles it. If one is asked to form a guess of the opinions that may come to prevail, and the changes that public sentiment may undergo, in the course of a few ages, there would seem to be no great difficulty, in the exercise of a large sagacity, corrected and extended by past experience, and by a consideration of the laws of human thought, to hazard a conjecture that might be tolerably near the truth, and especially if one is not called to assign the definite form that opinion may assume, or to be very precise as regards the

time when it will prevail. It is a nobler and much more difficult task to foretell a particular event, and to fix its precise period. If that event is put a thousand years into the future, the difficulty is vastly enhanced. How is a creature who knows not what a day may bring forth, to foresee what a thousand years may bring forth? How is he who cannot foretell the events of his own life, to forecast those of a nation? How is he to arrange the epochs of time, the kingdoms that are to arise, the order in which they are to flourish, the battles they are to wage, the countries they are to subdue, the period when they shall fall, and the successors who will stand up to inherit their dominion,—in short, to sketch the world's course for more than two thousand years on end? If Prophecy has disclosed a scheme like this, what a monument of Omniscience is Prophecy! On our interpretation, this is what Prophecy has done. How infallible, then, the conclusion that the book that contains this scheme is God's book!

Besides, how difficult, on the German scheme, to tell when the Prophecy is fulfilled! It is realized, not on the public stage, but in the minds of men. The prediction takes shape, not in a series of events which cannot be hid, but in a system of opinions which studious men only can discover. Its fulfilment, on this scheme, is removed into shade,—into very deep shade. You must analyze society at each particular epoch, and show that the schools which flourished at that epoch, the creeds that prevailed, and the systems of thought that were fashionable, are those very opinions and systems

to which the Prophecy pointed. This is ground always more or less debateable. Different parties may come to different conclusions. The Reformation scheme, in all ordinary cases, leaves room for neither doubt nor question. Did the predicted event happen at the predicted hour ? is the simple question here. History, on this scheme, is a public index, on which time registers the fulfilment or the failure of the Prophecy. That register friend and foe may consult at any hour. Nay, it may be said that the Prophecy proclaims its own fulfilment in the hearing of all. The clock of Providence strikes the hour in the realization of the event. For we may be sure that what Prophecy judged so important as to foretell ages beforehand, History will not deem so trifling as not to place upon her page. It is not the work of God to fulfil in secret what He notifies openly. “Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God: this is the day whereof I have spoken.”

Neither does the German scheme agree with the analogy of Prophecy under the Old Testament. The burden of Old Testament Prophecy was undoubtedly real kingdoms. Can any good reason be assigned why it should be different now ? Do not passions and principles still embody themselves in events ? Are not abstract opinions of little concern to man, save as they develop themselves in action ? Are not the doings of men and kingdoms the staple of history,—the things to which man looks forward with hope or anxiety, and on which he looks backward with interest or admira-

tion ? Why should Prophecy cut itself off from the events of life and the sympathies of men ? When Prophecy was about to become silent under the Old Testament, the Church was shown what was to befall her till the coming of the Messiah. But events, not doctrines, were confessedly the theme. The vision seen by the Prophet on the banks of the Ulai related to the kingdoms that were to arise, and the wars and battles that were to agitate the world, till the opening of the Christian dispensation, and onward even till the Time of the End. Not that these events were of so great importance in themselves : their importance lay in that to which they related,—the eternal kingdom of the Messiah, with which they were bound up, and for which they paved the way. So, again, at the final closing of revelation under the gospel, an outline was revealed of the history of the world till the opening of the Millennium. *Real* events were the theme of Daniel's Prophecy. And if this was not unworthy of God, neither is it unworthy of Him that real events should be the theme of John's Prophecy. Nay, as Mr Cunningham has remarked, "the Apocalypse is only a more enlarged prophecy of the same things as are contained in the Book of Daniel."

Does any one object that this is a low, gross view of Prophecy, and that it was unworthy of the spirit of Prophecy to reveal the rise of kingdoms, the policy of statesmen, and the conflicts of monarchs ? Does any one object that it is an abuse of inspiration to fill its page with such things ? We say it was not unworthy of

God. He is the doer of these things ; and what it is not beneath Him to do, it is not beneath Him to reveal. From his throne in heaven He directs and overrules all these events ; and in the exercise of a wisdom unsearchable, and a faithfulness unfailing, he makes every event and every agent to fulfil his appointed part, and contribute his modicum of help towards the execution of God's eternal and glorious plan. Was not God the Son exalted to the right hand of Power that He might thus govern the Universe? Is not this the everlasting reward promised to Him by the Father? Were not powers, principalities, thrones, dominions, and every creature on earth and under the earth, made subject to Him when he sat down ? Is He not actually engaged thus in ruling ? And what is the one grand object of his rule in subserviency to his own glory, but the Church ? Is it not the supremacy of the principles of righteousness, as embodied in the gospel, that He is slowly yet surely evolving by a government that extends over agents so manifold, over interests so varied, and over kingdoms so powerful ? How glorious the work of carrying on a government like this ! How sublime and mighty the end to be attained ! And what a manifestation of the omnipotent power and eternal Godhead of the Son !

CHAPTER III.

THE TYPOLOGY OF PROVIDENCE.

THERE is a silent, continuous prophecy underlying all nature, animate and inanimate. Nothing comes into being without having been typified, or in a sense predicted. This universal typology is founded in the constitution of things ; and that constitution is the result of the unity and unchangeableness of the Eternal Mind. One supreme and unchangeable mind must necessarily have one established order of principles or laws according to which it works. The inevitable result of this is, a certain generic uniformity in the working in all ages, in all departments, and in all worlds. Infinite variety there may be in the ultimate manifestation ; boundless diversity there may be in the detail ; but in the normal and governing principles there is, and must be, a similarity amounting to identity. This holds good in all departments of work, whether material or spiritual : all are linked together by the chain of one great unchangeable principle, and therefore each act in the series is the image or the prophecy of that which comes after it. History is thus an organism, not a sand-heap, of indi-

vidual and isolated facts ; it is a great tree, in whose living germ or seminal act lies wrapped up the great consummation. The first act, and each succeeding act of the series which stretches betwixt the first and the last, is the image, the type, the prediction, of the grand terminal one. Its coming is foretold, as it were, long before it comes ; and its image is a thousand and a thousand times seen before it is actually realized.

Our very bodies had their images on earth long ages ago. Rude and imperfect were the earliest prototypes of the human frame ; but prototypes there were. All through those geologic eras that preceded the human, man's advent may be said to have been foretold. An ingenious reasoner, had such then existed, would have inferred that a nobler and more perfect creature than any that had yet appeared would in due time arise. Among the uncouth and colossal animals that tenanted the globe in pre-Adamite times, science tells us there were approximations in several of their organs to the wondrous and finished mechanism of the human frame. In some there was a feeble approach to the brain, in others to the hand, showing that the Divine idea of man had already been formed,—had, indeed, existed before creation began. These were but dim revelations ; nevertheless, looking along the line of view which they opened up, the vista might be seen closed with the noble form of man, wearing the crown of his Maker's image, and head over all his works.

This reminds us that there is a higher typology than

that to which we have just adverted. As the coming of man might be seen through the long eras in the dim indications of nature, so the coming of the God-man might be seen all through the ages in the numerous types that prefigured Him. The whole worship of the Old Testament Church was a system of typology : all its rites and ordinances contemplated an end and object beyond and outside of themselves, and prefigured and foretold that end. The altar foreshadowed a better altar ; the sacrifice announced a greater sacrifice ; and the priest, in his robes of glory, was, after all, but a dim foreshadowing of that Priest of transcendent dignity and glory whom the oath of his Father had made a “ High Priest for ever.” But over and above the special types which of express purpose prefigured the person and work of Christ, there was a typical element underlying the whole Old Testament history. Scarce is there a personage of note in the sacred annals who is not typical. “ There cometh one after me mightier than I,” was the announcement, not of John only, but of all. Scarce was there an event in the history of the Church that was not typical. The deliverances which the Church celebrated when the yoke of Egypt, or of Midian, or of other enemy, was broken, presented a picture of a deliverance worthy of being celebrated with yet louder songs,—the dissolving of the yoke of her one great enemy by the sacrifice of the Cross. This typology differs, we admit, from the preceding. The first is founded in the constitution of things ; the latter had its existence from the express appointment of God.

But when we see the same general character stamped upon both,—typology inwoven into the one originally,—the other made typological by Divine enactment,—we are enabled to trace a very beautiful harmony between the two ; and our faith is confirmed in the doctrine that the same mind which gave to nature its peculiar constitution, gave likewise to the worship of the Old Testament Church its special form.

In nature we behold the principles of beauty and order developing and broadening in each successive stage, till the terminal act of Creation is reached. First, we see them dimly appearing in the crystal into which, in obedience to the law of attraction, the particles of matter arrange themselves ; next, we behold them budding in the flower ; and next, rising and expanding in the stately tree ; and lastly, we see them finding their consummation—their full and final revelation—in the system of the Universe. For the starry arch has for its key-stone the same principle that moulds the rain-drop ; and the glories of the sky are but evolutions on a grand scale of those same laws of beauty which give to the crystal its regularity, and to the flower its grace. So in Christ. His personal graces, his official gifts, the truth and grace of the gospel, how dimly did they break upon the world ! A solitary ray from some ceremonial rite or some typical person was all that was at first seen. But the light waxed apace as the dispensation passed on, and types shadowy and dim were succeeded by types clearer and fuller, till at last the scattered virtues and graces of a

thousand types were concentrated in the man Christ Jesus, and in his person and ministry the gospel-day broke upon the Church.

So is it in Providence. History has its types as well as nature ; and in seeking for the source of the historic typology, we must have respect both to the unchangeableness and universality of the laws by which God governs nations, and the special form which He stamps on certain events, in virtue of his special interposition. The one gives an essential identity to history ; and hence what are termed its “re-productions ;” for with great, invariable laws underlying it, a generic resemblance must come to reign among its great epochs. But over and above, there have been events so sharply defined, so obviously shaped and moulded, by the hand of God, that they can be regarded only as types, specially set forth, of other events that were to succeed them at the distance of ages. How often has the future risen upon the world in the very likeness of the past ! And has not that likeness sometimes been so striking, that the event which bore it seemed to men not so much a new event, as the former and veritable one wakened from its sleep of centuries, and returned to enact its part a second time upon the stage of the world ?

The Bible recognises and sanctions this typology of events. How often do we find it foretelling a deliverance yet to be achieved under the name of a deliverance already past ! And why ? but to teach the world that in the former it had seen the likeness, and not the likeness only, but the essential principles and ve-

ritable results, of that which was to come. The coming of John, the forerunner of the Messiah, was foretold under the name of Elijah. And why? Because John was to come in the spirit and the power of Elijah; he was to bear the same moral likeness, and fulfil a similar office, with his great type. This is the key to all similar predictions. When the Bible foretells the rising of the martyrs, it plainly indicates not the very martyrs who "are fallen on sleep," but new confessors, who are to stand up in their spirit and power, animated by their principles, and sustaining their cause. In like manner, when the Bible foretells a deliverance from Egypt, and a deliverance from Babylon, in an age yet to come, and paints, as it does, a triumphal procession of escaped captives, coming "unto Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads," it is not the literal Babylon that is meant,—it is no repetition of the literal drama for which we are to look,—but a drama which, while it will greatly transcend the former in its scale, will nevertheless be the same in its essential principles,—will resemble it in the power and goodness of God, and the victory it will bring to the Church. We cannot safely ignore, in our interpretations of Prophecy, the underlying typology of Providence. This principle gives much beauty, propriety, and significance to the terms of Prophecy, and especially to the application of the men and the events of the past to the scenes of the future.

On this principle, we firmly look for the providence of God culminating in a grand and universal deliver-

ance of the Church. Every one of her former deliverances was a step towards her final deliverance. Every former deliverance gave her wider views of Divine truth, enlisted additional forces in her service, and in one way or other bettered her position in the earth. But this deliverance will put her in possession of all truth ; it will enlist in her favour all the forces of the world, and place her in a position of complete, absolute, and impregnable security. “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah : we have a strong city ; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks”—(Isaiah xxvi. 1). Every former deliverance perceptibly raised her position, and enabled her the better to cope with other and hostile societies ; this will lift her to evident and indisputable supremacy. “It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills”—(Isaiah ii. 2). Every deliverance of former ages helped to extend her dominion, and open a wider sphere for her in the world ; this will put her in possession of the whole earth ; it will exalt her to sovereignty. When “the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains,” “all nations shall flow unto it.” Former deliverances brought her escape from this or the other enemy ; this will bring her victory over them all. The God of peace shall “bruise Satan” under her feet. Other deliverances were but temporary ; this, as regards time, will be everlasting. The truth will continue in her from age to age ; and as the night cannot

return while the light of the sun continues, so the darkness and slavery of error cannot be felt while truth, like a never-setting sun, shines within her and around her. "There shall be no night there." "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light thereof"—(Rev. xxi. 2). This will be the Church's great Exodus. And when on this day she marshals her ransomed host, and begins her mighty song, she will find that her members have escaped from every land on earth, and that her triumphal hymn is pealed forth by every tongue and kindred under heaven. "The days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land"—(Jer. xxiii. 7, 8).

These deliverances were types as well,—types of that one grand consummating deliverance in which they shall all find their completion. They foretold it; they exhibited its likeness. Each, as it passed by, shedding upon the Church its benediction, and emptying upon the world its vial of wrath, said to the one, for you there remaineth a greater blessing, and to the other, there cometh to you a mightier woe. They were judgment days; but, like Enoch, they prophesied of the coming of a greater, which was to finish what they had but begun. Like unto the first Exodus, then, will be

the second. It will be like it in every particular, only it will be greater. It will be like it as regards the position in which it will find the Church,—a small body comparatively, pressed by a powerful combination of foes, and brought to extremity. It will be like it, too, in its miracles. We look not for the stupendous physical signs to signalize the second which attended the first Exodus ; but we look for signs and wonders just as stupendous, although of a moral kind. Literal bars may not then shut in the Church, but political complications will do so ; crafty conspiracies and powerful combinations will enclose her like walls of brass, will roll around her like stormy seas ; and the Church's escape from these overwhelming dangers will be by a path so intricate and wonderful, that it will reveal the hand of God as visibly as did her escape of old from the literal "gates of brass" and the "bars of iron." And, in fine, the second Exodus will resemble the first, and will, in fact, repeat it, by the ruin it will pour upon the kingdoms which have kept the Church in bondage. When the tribes marshalled on the shore of the Red Sea, and with timbrels, and dances, and songs, celebrated their deliverance, Egypt lay behind them, a terrible scene of devastation and overthrow. So shall it be once more. When the Church takes her final flight, the Egypt of her bondage will again become a wreck. It is complete and total overthrow with which the type menaces all the anti-Christian kingdoms. Their power, glory, wealth, must all perish ; as things dedicated to idolatry, they are given over to

burning and utter consumption ; and the Church, emerging from a world in ruins, will enter on her mighty task of building up the earth, of restoring society, of rekindling the lamp of science and art, of loosening the sweet influences of civilization ; and so, having bound up the wounds and soothed the distractions of the nations, she will knit them together in the bonds of truth and love, and reign as mistress and sovereign of the new heavens and the new earth which are to rise upon the ruins of the old.

Such is the Exodus that is coming, and whose coming the first Exodus, and many others, typified and foretold. In no after age will it ever be forgotten. Like some mighty Alp—some monarch of mountains—which keeps in the traveller's eye after every surrounding hill has sunk beneath the horizon, this deliverance will be seen above the Church's horizon through all coming time. Beheld from the ages of the future, it will be seen towering proudly up, standing pre-eminent and alone, the one grand Exodus of the Church.

The reason of the typological character of Providence is as obvious as its wisdom is incontrovertible. Jehovah taught man as he was able to bear, and shaped the lesson to the growth of his faculty. Were it some marvellous and complicated piece of mechanism, whether should we prefer to study it in the machine or in the model ? If in the machine itself, would not the complexity of its parts and the rapidity of its movements bewilder us ? Would we not find the scale too great

for mastering the principle on which it was constructed? and would we not gladly turn to the model, where all is to be seen with greater simplicity, and within a more manageable compass?

And so, in unveiling his character, and proclaiming the great laws of his working, God sets before us first of all the model, and invites us to study it. He exhibits his justice, goodness, and truth, in action, first in miniature,—with reference to a single family or a single tribe; and, last of all, he presents them on the wider area of a kingdom or of a world. The principles are the same in both cases: it is the application only and the scale of development that are different. In nature, the law of gravity is equally illustrated in the dew-drop as in the vast terraqueous globe,—equally illustrated in the fall of the stone as in the revolution of the planet. In like manner, the moral principles of the Divine government are equally shown in the overthrow of a single individual as in the ruin of a world,—in the miniature dramas of early times, as in those great and terrible dispensations which are to pass over the earth in these latter days, making its pillars to tremble, and the stars of its sky to fall.

CHAPTER IV.

DIVINE METHOD OF REVELATION AND GOVERNMENT.

WE have only one other remark to make. God has carried on the unveiling of Himself and the instruction of the race from the beginning by three great and well-marked stages. The first was that of *oral communication*; the second was that of *typical revelation*; and the third was that of *moral demonstration*. **VOICES, TYPES, DISPENSATIONS**,—such are the three forms which Divine Revelation has successively assumed. It will be seen that there is a gradual widening of the sphere of revelation. The light from the Eternal centre obeys the same law as that from the natural sun. The sphere it fills expands directly as the distance increases.

In the first days of our race, ere yet the gates of Eden had closed upon our exiled progenitor, God descended, in person, and announced his will to Adam. After the Fall, the same method of communication was continued. But soon, in consideration of the frailty of a fallen creature, who could not bear to look upon the face of God, inspired men were substituted for the Creator. Enoch and Noah were prophets and

preachers of righteousness. We can trace the same method of instruction, continued for some considerable time, into the post-diluvian eras. The call of Abraham, the mission of Moses, in short, all the great moral epochs of the early world, were inaugurated by the personal appearance of Jehovah.

The world being now prepared for the transition, in the room of oral announcements came next symbolic revelations. The Divine voice did not become wholly and instantly silent. Oral communication was still employed in part, and as a subordinate means of revelation ; but the main and established channel of instruction was now the symbolic. A typological system of worship was appointed. The great fundamental doctrines of supernatural religion were put before the world in type : for what is a type, but the embodiment of a truth,—a doctrine in symbol ? That typical system was, in truth, a preacher of righteousness. It continually addressed the eye, and, through the eye, the understanding. With the key of the system in man's possession,—for God had already made it known,—it required but little study to read off its meaning as accurately and clearly as if it had been written on the leaves of a book. The Levitical worship was just a pre-revelation of the New Testament, written in typical characters instead of ordinary ones. In the early and symbolic volume was there wanting one cardinal truth which has found a place in the latter and literal one ? The fall, the atonement, regeneration by the Spirit, on the one side ; and, on the other, the holiness, the truth,

and the love of God,—these were the great truths which the types revealed, and these are the great truths that form the burden of the New Testament.

And when the typical passed into the antitypical, and shadow became substance, then commenced the higher and broader form of Divine revelation,—that, viz., of moral demonstration. We call it the higher because it is the more spiritual. In our age no prophet comes forth to address men ; no type utters its mystic voice ; but those very principles which prophet and type had previously revealed are now developed in action, are embodied in mighty dispensations, and are seen sweeping, in righteousness and terror, across the stage of time. *Five words* sufficed in a former age to announce some great truth ; but *five centuries* are required now to permit that truth to manifest and unfold itself. “Holy, Holy, Holy!” was the seraph’s cry. That cry is still pealed forth by cherubic dispensations. Those mighty moral revolutions which take centuries to complete their cycle, and which, as they pass across the stage, crush beneath their chariot-wheel triumphant wickedness, while they lift up the righteous from the dust, repeat in mightier thunders the seraph’s cry, “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord.” It was the temple-roof that resounded with those strains, when uttered in the prophet’s hearing : the mighty voice of the other will awaken the echoes of a world, and ring along the arches of the sky. These are the prophets God now sends to men. Potent they are ; their fan is in their hand ; they speak as one having authority. We can-

not bind them to a stake, as men did the earlier prophets ; nor can we shut them up in a dungeon, and so silence their message. They defy the fetter and the faggot. Thus it is that God now reveals himself. This is the brightness of his coming. With his own essential splendour does he fill the world. He irradiates the earth with the fire of his holiness and justice, and beatifies his Church with the soft brilliancy of his truth and lovingkindness.

When the philosopher would demonstrate some theorem in the mathematics, how does he proceed ? He takes a sheet of paper, and constructs thereon with his pen a diagram. From the lines and angles of this diagram he proceeds to reason ; he advances step by step ; and at length he arrives at his conclusion. He has demonstrated the truth of his proposition. But the truth which he has demonstrated on this limited surface, and by the aid of these lines and angles, is a truth, he knows, of universal application. Though this sheet of paper were a million of times larger, and though these lines were a million of times longer, it would not in the slightest affect the result at which he has arrived. The theorem would be equally true, if worked out upon the area of a kingdom, as when worked out upon the little bit of paper before him ; it would be equally true were he dealing with quantities themselves, as when dealing, as he here does, with but the representatives of quantities.

But, farther, we shall suppose that the philosopher in question wishes to make the correctness of his de-

monstration yet more clear, and the truth of his theorem yet more convincing. What now does he do ? He assumes that the theorem is false. Proceeding on this assumption, he takes another sheet of paper : he describes thereon a new diagram. From the lines and angles now before him he proceeds to reason ; and, advancing step by step, as aforetime, he arrives at last at a self-evident contradiction, or at a palpable falsehood. This is the *reductio ad absurdum*. It is as much a proof of the truth of the theorem as was the direct demonstration : it is a verification by the converse. Here are two witnesses. Assuming the theorem to be true, and reasoning therefrom, he arrives at a truth. Assuming the theorem to be false, and reasoning therefrom, he arrives at a falsehood. At the mouth of these two witnesses the theorem is established.

Fully confiding in the truth of his principles, and being well assured that by their help he may remove mountains, fill up valleys, or measure the bulk of the distant planets, he goes forth, and applies them in the construction of works of great practical utility. He engirdles the earth with iron roads ; he hangs a pathway over the yawning chasm or the boiling deep ; he bores through great mountains ; he bridges over wide oceans ; he enables nations to hold instantaneous converse, although divided from one another by mighty mountain-chains and stormy seas ; he brings near, the ends of the earth ; he opens highways for industry ; creates pledges of peace ; scatters abundance among the homes of men ; diffuses the light of civilization

and science ; and thus he demonstrates that not only are these principles true, be the scale on which they are applied ever so great, but that they are beneficent as true. They confer on man the dominion of the earth on which he dwells.

After the same fashion does God proceed in establishing those great theorems that lie at the foundation of personal virtue and national prosperity. First of all, he announces them on the page of the Bible. There they stand, like the diagram of the mathematician, open to the eye of all. The announcement is in language brief, simple, and plain, like the unpretending lines of a mathematical demonstration ; yet is it representative of a power to save or to destroy, according as it is believed and obeyed, or repudiated and disobeyed.

But this is not all. Jehovah demonstrates these propositions on a great scale. He comes forth upon the broad stage of the world, and by the acts of his providence he works out the truth of his great moral theorems. He conducts his demonstration leisurely. He takes two centuries, or, it may be, five centuries, to reason out his conclusion. And why ? Because he wishes that men may understand every step in the process, and that its crowning lesson may remain fixed in the world's mind for all time, as an eternal truth, an immutable law. It pleases Him, too, to employ two modes of demonstration,—the *reductio ad verum*, and the *reductio ad absurdum*. He lets one nation assume that the theorem is true, and, working on that idea, it arrives in due time at greatness. He permits another

nation to assume that the theorem is false ; and, fashioning its policy accordingly, it arrives at ruin. It sinks into the blackness of political and moral death, as surely as the other mounts to dominion and glory. Thus, by two witnesses that cannot lie, does God ratify and seal every word he has spoken in the Bible. The one witness testifies that the proposition cannot be false ; and the other testifies that its converse cannot be true. They stand like a double-headed Janus,—the one looking back on greatness lost, the other looking forth on greatness achieved. The truth of the Divine Word is demonstrated with equal emphasis in the nation that is lost and in the nation that is saved.

Let us take an instance. It scarcely matters at what place we open the volume of history. There is not a page in it all on which we do not see this proof in progress, or in the act of being summed up. We open the book at the middle of the sixteenth century. A moment's glance at the several kingdoms of the European commonwealth presents contrasts sufficiently striking. This one in especial challenges our attention. It is the great empire of Charles V., and the little territory of Scotland.

Since the days of imperial Rome, there had arisen no empire like the empire of Spain. In the occupant of the Escurial, as aforetime in the occupant of the Palatine, the world had again found its master. Under the sceptre of that master were gathered the races and tongues of a third part of the globe. To adapt the bold image of the prophet to the stately Spanish mo-

narchy, “the” Spaniard “was a cedar in” Europe, “with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs, the waters made him great, the deep set him up on high, with her rivers running round about his plants; and sent out his little rivers unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth”—(Ezek. xxxi. 3-5). The Spanish monarchy at that period stood without a rival at the head of Europe. Its territory, which extended over three continents, was made up of the fairest lands on the globe; it was served by the ablest statesmen of the age; its exchequer was replenished from the wealth of a world; its armies were inured to victory in every hemisphere; its fleets rode triumphant on the ocean. The astute genius of Charles, and the matchless deceit of Philip, had won for its policy the reputation of consummate ability. Nations sued humbly at its gates, and kings waited to learn their destiny from its award. It had laid its right hand upon Mexico and Peru; and the rich and various products of their soil, and the wealth of their mines, borne across the deep, stocked the markets and filled the mints and silver shops of Spain. With its left hand it grasped the Orient, and gathered the fragrant spices and precious gems of Eastern India. Her’s, too, were the manufactures of Belgium. The forges of Liege and the looms of Bruges and Ghent

ministered to her luxury. Her's were the corn, and oil, and silk, of Lombardy : her's were the fine wheat and the wines of the two Sicilies. And to her from every region on earth came galleons, richly laden with the precious things of the air, the earth, and the sea. Thus was she great. The sky was not high enough for her proud head, nor the earth broad enough for her lordly limbs. Spain said, in the pride of her heart, as she looked abroad over a world that seemed created only for her use, The cedars in the garden of God cannot hide me : the fir trees are not like my boughs, and the chestnut trees are not like my branches ; nor any tree in the garden of God is like unto me in my beauty.

At the head of this vast empire stood Philip II. If ever man did, Philip governed for an idea. That idea was the entire and absolute submission of the conscience of every human being to his will, or, which was the same thing, to the authority of the Church of Rome. "The Church alone is lord of the conscience." Such was the theorem, the truth of which Philip undertook to demonstrate. This theorem was with Philip the sum of all wisdom. Out of it, the Spanish king infallibly held, must grow the order of the world, the prosperity of states, and the happiness, here and hereafter, of every individual. The magnificent Spanish monarchy became but the embodiment of this idea, and the whole administration of government the machinery for carrying it into effect. That this idea was true, and that it would conquer, Philip never for a moment doubted. And, indeed,

why should it not, seeing it was backed by the armies, the fleets, the statesmanship, the policy, and the whole power, of the Spanish monarchy ? Well, the long centuries must try. Having based his splendid empire upon this idea, and staked its progress upon its truth, Philip dies, and with kingly pomp is laid in the vaults of the Escurial.

Leaving the Spanish king to sleep his deep sleep, and the Spanish monarchy to work out its great experiment, big with momentous issues of good or of evil, we turn our steps into Northern Europe. The mariner, sailing under the star of the pole, descries a little country in the North Sea, its naked mountains shrouded in clouds, and its rocky strand beaten incessantly by ocean's angry surge. What a contrast to Spain, with its fruitful soil, its delicious climate, its stately cities, and its colossal shadow covering both occident and orient, is this insignificant, hardly-known, and rarely-visited country, on whose shores we now set foot ! Between the Scotland of the sixteenth century and the Spain of the sixteenth century we find a contrast than which that age offered no greater, and never perhaps has a greater been offered by any age before or since. Of Scotland, the plough had as yet scarce tamed the soil. Bits of meadow and patches of corn land gleamed out amid the all but universal covering of brown moor and black wood. Here art had reared no stately cities. The sons of this land dwelt in hovels of mud or in tenements of wood. Commerce had not filled its harbours and its highways with

traffic, or enriched its towns with the produce of other climes. Learning and science had not yet refined the manners and expanded the minds of its citizens. Law struggled to maintain a precarious footing amid the insubordination of lordly Churchmen and the turbulence of factious barons. The burghers had scarce tasted of freedom. The throne, weak at home, was despised abroad. Philip, although he plotted industriously to annex France and subjugate England, appears to have deemed Scotland unworthy of his thoughts. What appreciable addition could so poor a country have brought to the lordly empire of Spain ? Philip, it is true, was all-covetous, although rich in kingdoms: still, he scarce coveted this kingdom. But who at that hour would have had the boldness to predict, that the Scotch fir-tee, rooted in this infertile soil, and buffeted by these unkindly blasts, would one day overtop the great Spanish cedar ? "How can this thing be ?" it would have been asked, had such an augury been dropped. Among the sons of that land there arose one who, although he wore no crown, yet carried in his breast a kingly soul, and by that soul ruled his nation. Like Philip, too, this man governed for an idea. But Knox's idea was not Philip's idea. Knox's idea was the direct converse of Philip's idea. "God alone," said Knox, "is Lord of the conscience." This idea was with Knox the sum of all liberty. It was a little seed, and it was deposited in a little country; but Knox knew it to be a seed of life. Out of it would come, first a free gospel, next a free consti-

tution ; and to these two indispensable things would be added all that is needful to a nation,—order, industry, commerce, science, art, political power, and, in due time, greatness. The little Scotland, with this idea, he would back against the great Spain, with all her armies and fleets, her wealthy dependencies, and her subtle state-craft. So far as the bigotry and factions of the age permitted, Knox made his country an embodiment of this idea. Upon it did he frame its organization ; upon it did he stake its existence as an independent state ; and, having done so, Knox died ; and, amid signs of sorrow, unostentatious but deep, was laid in the grave.

Three hundred years pass over Europe. It is the middle of the nineteenth century. The Papal world is rocking to and fro by the successive shocks of a great revolution. Philip feels it in the vaults of the Escorial, and quits his tomb. Knox, too, rises from his grave. Now for the proof of the two ideas.

Clearing his eyes from the dust of the sepulchre, Philip looks around on the dominions he once governed. He surveys once more the scene of his former grandeur. What is this which he sees ? Is this his once magnificent Spain ? or does he dream ? Is it a reality ? or is it some hideous phantom of the grave that mocks his sight ? He would see that mighty empire on whose vast dominions the sun never set. Surely this cannot be it, shrivelled up into these naked, barren, and depopulated provinces, lying betwixt the Pyrenees and the sea ! He would see his princely cities. Once he

counted them by hundreds. They were the abodes of industry and skill, the emporiums of riches, and the homes of elegance. Where and what are they now? Blots on the soil which they once adorned. Decay and ruin have stricken them. Reeking with filth, steaming with poisonous stenches, they are the haunts of vice, the nests of idleness, and the lairs of beggary. He would see the unrivalled cultivation that covered those plains on which the trees and shrubs of Europe were mingled with the aromatic flowers of the East,—those olive groves, those citron and orange gardens, from which queenly cities looked forth, and where villages clustered by hundreds, walled around from the breath of tempest by their grand sierras. Instead of this proud spectacle, there meets his astonished eye dreary wastes, where no rivulet flows, where no flower blooms, where no tree gives its shadow, and where the heart is uncheered by the sight of man, or of man's dwelling. The desert extends over a full half of this once richly cultivated soil. In this unhappy land industry has lost its skill, art has forgot its cunning, and science has extinguished her lamp. To this shore there comes not now the richly freighted galleon: the harbours of Spain are choked up. Into her marts are poured no longer the corn of Lombardy, the rich fabrics of the Netherlands, the gold and silver of Peru. The haughty hidalgos and conquerors of the sixteenth century have sunk into brigands, beggars, and monks. Philip's descendants are contemned for their vices, and pitied for their weakness. His throne is a byword

among the nations by whom it was once obeyed. Historians are searching his archives, reading his letters, and bringing forth from a darkness which the Spanish king had hoped would be eternal, the record of the intrigues, the hypocrisies, and the crimes, by which he sought to prop up his power. Philip beholds all this ; and there gathers on his “ dreary visage ” a deeper blackness than on the day when he was told of the destruction of his “ Invincible Armada.” “ Surely,” he exclaims, “ the judgment has sat ; surely the books have been opened. This is the great day of the wrath of the Lamb. Let me flee to the vaults of the Escorial ; let me hide myself for ever in the tomb.”

Philip had staked his empire upon the truth of his theorem. That theorem, as we have said, was the entire and unqualified submission of the conscience of every man upon the earth to the authority of the Church. The Church was to think for all ; the Church was to believe for all ; and whoever should maintain as false what she defined to be true was to be burned alive in this world, and consigned to eternal damnation in the next. This was Philip’s maxim of government. If true, this maxim would raise Spain to a yet dizzier height of wealth and power ; if false, it could not fail to smite the very roots of its prosperity and glory. From the hour that Spain adopted this dogma, her course was downwards, and ever downwards. Her destruction came like an armed man ; conscience was oppressed ; virtue departed ; genius, skill, industry, wealth, military glory, political sway,—all forsook her ; nothing

could arrest her decline ; Philip's maxim hung like a mill-stone round her neck ; and she who in the sixteenth century had stood at the head of Europe, queen of a hundred dependencies, and mistress of a third of the globe, has in the nineteenth become the basest of the European kingdoms. Her experiment of three centuries has ended in a *reductio ad absurdum*. In the ruin of Spain we read the falsehood of Philip's maxim. But what of the counterpart idea ?

He who had gone down to the grave never having feared the face of man, returns from it equally courageous. Knox looks around, to see how it fares with the little country which he had made the champion of a great principle. Can this be the land in the dust of which three hundred years ago he lay down to rest ? It must be ; it can be none other. Here it is ; its place on the map of the globe unchanged, and lying betwixt the old parallels of latitude and longitude. But in every other respect how different ! While Knox has been sleeping, with what a wondrous vitality and force has his principle been operating ! It has come upon Scotland like the unseen yet resistless powers of spring, driving before it the rigidity and darkness of winter, and cleansing, renewing, and beautifying the whole face of the land, and the whole face of society. It has rent from the soul the shackles of ignorance and superstition, and from the body the fetters of feudalism. It has purified the land from friars, images, saints' days, and masses. Cowls, cords, beads, and crosses, with their inseparable attendants, idleness,

degradation, and filth, have all disappeared ; and in their room have come an “open Bible,”—that fount of liberty ; “the Sabbath,”—that day of blessed rest and holy thought ; and “a Christian worship,” with its sanctuaries scattered sweetly over hill, and valley, and city, and sending up the melody of psalms and the voice of prayer in the Sabbath stillness, to the great Jehovah. Beginning here, this silent but mighty principle has penetrated downwards into every department of the nation’s life and the nation’s action, vivifying and transforming it. Amid the storms of the North Sea it has created an isle of beauty. At the extremities of Europe it has opened a fountain of civilization. Where the deep darkness of an ancient barbarism brooded, the lamp of science and of letters now burns. The brown moor has given place to fields of golden grain ; the morass has been converted into rich pasture-lands ; the dark forest has fallen before the axe ; and cultivated fields or thriving towns now occupy its place. It has given to Scotland a husbandry which Lombardy might do well to imitate ; and has spread out beneath its northern sky landscapes which Spain and Italy might envy. On the Scottish soil art has erected the fairest of earthly cities ; and from the Scottish genius has proceeded that one mechanical invention which, more than all others, is destined to give man the dominion of the earth on which he dwells, and is rapidly revolutionizing the whole labour of the globe. As one with England, Scotland enjoys a home industry and a foreign commerce which far transcends that of Spain in her palmy

days ; and she stands at the head of an empire which, whether we regard area of territory, population, or resources, is double that of Spain in the zenith of her power, as Spain was double that of the Roman empire. Thus has Knox's principle been tested. Nothing could be more complete as a demonstration of its truth than the Britain of the nineteenth century. Its triumph is indeed magnificent.

Understood aright, the present state of Europe is one of the grandest sermons ever preached to the world. There is no lesson like it,—no lesson so emphatic and so full of high and solemn meaning,—to be read anywhere out of the Bible. It is, in fact, a re-exhibition of the Bible. It is a new revelation to the nations, of those same doctrines regarding the Divine government which were given in early ages by the pens of inspired men. In two points only does this *new* writing differ from the *old*, and these are points noways material ; they regard the form, not the subject-matter, of the revelation. The first writing was given in words, the second in facts. The first writing contained much in a small space. A few moments of time sufficed for the enunciation of some immutable principle of the government of the All-Powerful ; and a single brief sentence fixed it for ever on the inspired page. Not so in the other writing : there has been no such economising of time and space. A thousand years have been required to enunciate what in the Bible is given in a single line. A whole continent has not been too large, and a whole millennium has not been too long, for the revelation of

great fundamental principles touching the government of the Eternal. There are, in truth, two Bibles before the world. Both proceed from the same Author ; and the same finger has written both. The infidel snarls and denies the one, unaware all the while of the existence of the other, which repeats, not with pen and ink, but with sounds that fill the world, in the rise and prosperity, the decline and fall of nations, the very same truths that are written in the other. The Great Ruler inflicts his vengeance now, not by physical terrors, but by permitting evil systems to ripen and shed their venom on their supporters. No doubt it takes many ages,—in the case of the Papal nations it has taken twelve centuries,—to complete this course, and bring round the judgment-day ; but that day comes round at last ; and then it is seen to be a public execution following upon a patient and judicial trial. The punishment is seen, not as the result of accident, but as the operation of law,—of those great, righteous, and immutable laws by which the Supreme governs the world. Such, in brief, is the nature of that dispensation under which, as we take it, the Continental nations have now passed, and such are the principles upon which the events that have of late befallen them are to be explained and vindicated.

In this way, too, does God authenticate his Word. If you ask, Where is the proof that the Bible is the Word of God? we answer, Look back on history ; look around you on the world. You say, Let an angel descend from heaven, or let a prophet come up from the tomb, and we will believe. But why ask any authenti-

cation from the other world ? A greater than Moses, or than any prophet from the dead, is present in this,—stands before us. He who gave the Bible at first is giving it over again, not in *letter*, but in *fact*. Why ask proof of the first revelation, when we ourselves are witnesses of the second ? Why seek for a confirmation of the words, when the facts are undeniably before us ? And the very slowness of the process, the very length of the time required for the evolution of some great principle, makes the demonstration the more perfect and the proof the more irresistible. Were it a single act, it might be held to be a coincidence ; but when it is a series of acts, ranging over long centuries, and embodying the very principles of the Bible, there is no room for doubting the character of the manifestation. This is God,—the God of the Bible. And though every grave on earth were to open, and their dead to arise, their testimony could by no means be so satisfactory and irrefragable as the testimony which God is bearing to Himself and to his Word in these dispensations. If we believe not Him, neither would we believe were the dead to arise.

CHAPTER V.

FIGURATION OF THE WORLD'S DAY AND THE CHURCH'S NIGHT.

THE present enquiry is not regarding the “end of time :” it is regarding the “time of the end.”

There is fixed by God a great final day. When that day arrives, time shall number and finish its cycles ; the trump of God shall sound ; the dead shall rise ; the great white throne shall be erected in the sky ; and the terrestrial career of our race shall terminate amid the terrors of a dissolving universe, and the solemnities of a grand assize. That great day knoweth no man,—no, not the angels of heaven,—but the Father only.

But the one great cycle of human duration or of history is made up of a number of lesser cycles. The present enquiry is regarding the end of one of these cycles. The moment we open the volume of Prophecy, there meets our eye a notable and outstanding epoch. The merest tyro in the study of Prophecy cannot possibly miss it. It stands on the prophetic page with a margin of deepest blackness all round it. This epoch has a character all its own. It is diverse from every

epoch going before it : it is diverse from every epoch coming after it. During this period society was to be inverted ; the world, so to speak, was to be turned upside down. The principles of despotism and idolatry, which in a better ordered state of things would have gravitated to the bottom, were to rise to the summit, and gain the ascendancy in human affairs ; while the principles of truth and righteousness, overborne by the powers of evil, were to become subordinate, and lose their influence in the government of the world. A bright day of truth and liberty was to rise upon the earth, but its dawn could not come till this long and gloomy epoch had run out.

During this hour of "the Power of Darkness," Jehovah was, in appearance, to abdicate the government of the world. The sceptre was to be grasped by Satan. The earth was to become a province of the great empire of darkness. To Lucifer, the ruler of this empire, was every knee to be bowed, and at his footstool all the treasures of the world were to be laid. Crowns and armies, philosophy and art, poetry with her charms, wealth with her splendours, and pleasure with her seductions,—all were to be given into Satan's hands, that with them he might extend his kingdom and reward his servants. A long and glorious career was opening to the world-power ; but in proportion as the day brightened around it, the night of affliction and captivity was to deepen and darken around the Church.

The drama now opening before us,—its periods, the

character of the political and ecclesiastical confederacies that were to dominate during it, and the awful judgments attending their fall,—it will be our business to examine at large in the following portions of our work. Meanwhile, and as preparatory to the fuller investigation of the subject, let us take a glance at the manner in which this epoch,—this epoch of highest glory to the world, and of deepest humiliation to the Church,—is figured in Prophecy.

This dark dispensation did not overtake the Church without warning. It is remarkable that, at the very moment of entering on this servitude, and on the very scene where its opening years were to be passed, the curtain should have been lifted, and a view given to the Church and the world of the future that was before both. Night has fallen on the world's capital, and silence and slumber reign in the palace of the King of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar has a dream, and in that dream a majestic image stands before him. "Thou, O King, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet part of iron and part of clay"—(Daniel, ii. 31, 32, 33).

This image was the symbol of the epoch of which we speak ; and we are here taught that this epoch should last during the entire currency of the four great empires whose rise is here foretold. First in the image

comes the head “of fine gold :” there is the Babylonian empire. Next come the “breast” and “arms of silver :” there is the Medo-Persian empire. Then follow the “belly” and “thighs of brass :” there is the Macedonian or Greek empire. And, lastly, come “his legs of iron, and his feet part of iron and part of clay :” there is the Roman empire, to which its predecessors make full transference of all their power and glory, and whose latter end is to fall before “the stone cut out of the mountain without hands.”

So far, at present, the image which rose upon the monarch’s sight in his dream. There stood the world’s one master. There stood the Church’s great oppressor. At the feet of the power here symbolized were all the successive generations of the world to bow down, till the appointed term of its dominion had run out. During that period it was to be well with its friends, but ill with its enemies. To it were to belong the wealth, the pleasure, the glory of the world ; and it could bestow or withhold them as it pleased. It had stars of rank and robes of purple for those who should stoop down and do obeisance to it ; but dungeons, chains, and death, wherewith to chastise the man who should dare oppose its will, or obey any law save its own. So was it to act during the days of its dominancy. Whom it would it would slay, and whom it would it would keep alive.

It was not one figuration only, but two, which was given in Prophecy of this gloomy epoch. The first, as we have just seen, was given to a heathen monarch ; the second was given to a holy Prophet. “And for

that the dream was doubled : it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."

In the night visions there passed before Daniel, as we read in the seventh chapter of his Prophecy, four wild beasts. These four beasts were the symbols of the same four empires which were in succession to pass across the stage of the world, and be succeeded by a kingdom that should never pass away. The first beast was "like a lion,"—the Babylonian kingdom. The second beast was "like to a bear,"—the Medo-Persian kingdom. The third beast was "like a leopard,"—the Greek kingdom. The fourth beast was "dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth ; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it ; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it ; and it had ten horns,"—the terrible Roman kingdom. So far the figuration. The image composed of four metals that stood before the king, and the four beasts that passed before Daniel, are representative of the same epoch, and that the epoch of Satan's domination upon earth, through the instrumentality of despotic kingdoms and idolatrous churches.

Having seen how this epoch is figured in Prophecy, let us next mark how its close is described.

Daniel, in the seventh chapter of his Prophecy, and ninth verse, thus describes the close of this period :— " I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as

snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame." John, in the Book of Revelation, the twentieth chapter, speaking of the same epoch, thus says:—"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." These prophets are not speaking of the end of time, and the winding up of that great cycle which embraces all the epochs of human history: they are speaking, as we shall afterwards show, of the end of the "four empires;" and they depict the solemnities of that era by figures borrowed from the great day of final judgment..

As Time itself shall end in a great judgment-day, so this epoch is represented as ending in a judgment-day. When the great cycle of the world's entire duration shall have run out, God's trump shall sound; the dead of all past generations shall rise; the Creator in person shall descend and take his seat as

Judge upon the great white throne ; all who have ever lived, with all their actions, shall come up for acquittal or condemnation ; and the mansions of eternal life, or the abodes of outer and everlasting darkness, shall receive the two companies into which the sentence of the Judge will divide the countless assembly which the trumpet's peal will sist before his tribunal.

On the exemplar of the greater cycle is formed the less. When the epoch represented by the image shall close, God's trump will sound, the earthquake of revolution will shake the world, the graves will open ; all who have lived during the epoch then closing will rise ; their character and their actions will pass in review before the great white throne, and receive from the righteous Judge that sentence of approval which will open to those on whom it is pronounced the gates of the new paradise, or that sentence of condemnation and rejection which will open to those on whom it shall fall the doors of the abyss,—the lake burning with fire and brimstone.

Now, we must bear in mind that the first of these judgment-days,—that which will close the cycle of all time,—is literal. The second judgment-day,—that which will close this one epoch of time,—is symbolical. We are shut up to this conclusion by the admitted fact that the Prophecies in which this “day of wrath” is foretold are symbolical, and not literal.

On the typological principle we have already expounded, the first judgment-day is the forerunner of the great and final one. The first will bear the like-

ness of the second. But, though symbolical, it will be a real judgment. The tribunal, though unseen, will be real ; the Judge, though unseen, will be real ; the sentence, though pronounced by no audible voice, and executed by no visible ministers, will be a real sentence, followed by a real execution. From the presence of that veiled throne there will issue forth unseen but irresistible forces, which will lay hold upon the guilty, and overwhelm them in ruin. This is the hour to which all Prophecy points : this is the "coming" sung of by the Old Testament Church, while yet a very far off ; and sung of, too, by the New Testament Church, often with but a partial knowledge of the "coming" which her songs welcomed. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence—(Psalm l. 1-6). Silent he had been during the long papal night ; but the period of silence is over now ; and suddenly, heralded by the tempestuous fires of judgment, there rises upon the unexpectant nations a great moral Tribunal. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence : a fire shall devour before Him, and be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me : those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice,"—that is, those who have during the papal apostacy continued faithful on the ground of the one Great Sacrifice ; and who, as the consequence, shall now enjoy protection, as the Israelites did under the blood of their paschal sacrifice. It follows,—

“ And the heavens shall declare his righteousness, for the Lord is Judge himself.” That this grand exhibition of judicial righteousness is placed in gospel times, and will constitute the immediate precursor of the Millennium, is evident from the beginning of the psalm, which makes this epoch of judgment contemporaneous with the blessed day when God shall shine “out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,” and when the “mighty God” shall call “the earth” to the knowledge of his name, “from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.”

We shall select one more prediction, out of a multitude in the Psalms, of this great coming, and the moral tempests that will precede it. In that noble triumphal ode, the ninety-seventh Psalm, the earth, in the opening stanza, is called on to rejoice, and the multitude of its isles to be glad. The earth bidden rejoice ! and its isles called to be glad ! How strange ! Is it possible that that same earth which for ages had been peopled with only nations in chains, and from whose continents and islands there had risen from century to century the groan of oppression and the wail of woe, should yet, throughout all its kindreds and realms, re-echo the voice of gladness ? Is it possible, we ask, that this shall be ? It stands here most surely foretold. Not foretold now for the first time, when tyrant thrones begin to totter, and insurgent nations are rending their chains ; but foretold four thousand years ago, and sung of by the Hebrew Bard, who, looking across the ages, dark with slavery and crime, described the world’s jubilee yet

a very far off, and shouted forth the first free, bold welcome to liberty. Well, the earth and its islands are bidden rejoice. But while we are straining the ear to catch the first notes of the song, a terrific vision rises upon our sight. A throne is seen to be set in heaven. Around it are rolled clouds of sevenfold blackness ; a devouring fire goes before that throne, scattering and utterly consuming its enemies ; while through the darkness that envelops it, the lightning's blaze is seen, and the thunder's voice is heard. The earth trembles, and the hills are melted like wax. It is not till this awful tempest has spent its fury, and its thunders have rolled past, that the song for which we had waited is heard. We are now told of a "victory" which the Lord hath won ; we are told that "they that serve graven images" have been "confounded ;" that God's "righteousness hath been openly showed in the sight of the heathen ;" and that "all the ends of the earth have seen" his "salvation." And now, the judgment at an end, the song begins. It rises in low silvery strains of quiet gladness ; but soon it grows into a magnificent and universal anthem, in which all creatures and all nature take part. First "Zion is glad ;" the elder Churches begin to praise. Next the "daughters," the younger Churches, "rejoice." Then rapidly rises the song, every moment gathering strength and volume : the "harp" adds its melody ; the "cornet" its soft strains ; the "trumpet" breaks in with its clanging notes ; the sea roars ; the floods clap their hands ; the hills shout ; from shore to shore resounds the mighty peal ; and, as

it rolls onward over earth and over sea, it bears with it the exultant joy of all earth's ransomed nations, and, finally, swells upward in a thunder-peal of praise to heaven.

But let us mark that this is the very same drama,—the same in its gloomy passage through long ages of bondage,—the same in its ending in a fierce conflict, a glorious victory, and a ransomed and triumphing world,—which is pictured forth by these early psalmists, as by the later prophets, Daniel and John. The same symbols, moreover, are employed in the Psalms as in the Apocalypse, to exhibit the close of this eventful epoch. In both it is symbolized as a judgment-day, teaching us that as the whole race of Adam must pass through a judgment-day, before entering upon their eternal state, so the nations of the world must pass through a judgment-day before entering upon their Millennial rest.

Yet again: let us turn to the eighteenth Psalm. What an unparalleled scene of grandeur and terror is presented to us! There is nowhere, even in the Bible, a finer description of the power and majesty of Jehovah than in this psalm; and as regards the greatest of uninspired authors, the highest flights of Homer and the boldest conceptions of Dante are in comparison wanting in beauty and force,—are frivolous and grovelling,—beside the massy majesty, the soaring sublimity, of the Psalmist,—the undazzled, daring gaze, we should call it, were it not inspired, which he casts upon the very face of God. But what scene is it which David

describes with such lavish munificence of imagery? We are told that David "spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul." But there is nothing in David's personal history that could justify a song like this. He personates the Church. In David the Church here sings by anticipation the terrors of that day when God, remembering her condition, encompassed by the "sorrows of death" and the "floods of the ungodly,"—the twelve hundred and threescore days of her sack-cloth state,—and hearing her cry,—the cry from under the altar,—shall bow the heavens and come down at the "time of the end," shall shake the earth with revolution, remove the hills, that is, overthrow governments, lay bare "the world's foundations," in the exposure of the falsehoods on which society has been based, discover the "channels of the waters," by convulsing the nations; and, having smitten them with the "arrows" of his judgments, and having rained upon them the "hailstones" of war and invasion, He will scatter the thrones and hierarchies which have oppressed his people, and utterly uproot the whole political and ecclesiastical power which has upheld idolatry; and thus he will achieve the final deliverance of his Church. This is the drama that passes before us in this psalm, with unequalled terror and grandeur. It is the very drama which afterwards passes before us in the Apocalypse.

It is not Daniel only who has joined together the

"time of trouble, such as never was ever since there was a nation," and the time when "thy people shall be delivered,—every one that shall be found written in the book." All the prophets have done so.

It is impossible to read their prophecies without being satisfied that they all point to some great and terrible crisis of the world, which even they, prophets though they were, trembled to contemplate, and which they could find no words strong enough, and no imagery dark enough, to shadow forth. There runs through the pages of Isaiah, for instance, a mingled stream of light and fire. The richest promises and the most fearful denunciations are not unfrequently woven together; and it is ever by the side of the brightest vision of the Millennial Church that we find the darkest image of coming judgment. "I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem,"—says the prophet, addressing the Church for the last time. But even now, at the very close, his prophecy retains that mingled character of blessing and judgment which had marked it throughout. "For, behold," he immediately adds, "the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and his rebukes with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many"—(Isaiah, lxvi. 12-16). In the vision of the warrior re-

turning from Edom, the land of the idolatrous power, "red in his apparel," and his "garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat,"—which is just the same great drama foreshortened,—the prophet joins in one "the day of vengeance" and "the year of my redeemed"—(Isaiah lxiii. 1-6). It is the same with all the prophets. It matters not whether it is Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, or Joel, or Amos, that speaks: it is the same great final and universal retribution, the same assembling of all nations for judgment, which is the burden of all of them. Their prophecies have a fulness about them, a comprehensiveness of scope, which no mere partial infliction can exhaust; and they move in a curve (if we may be allowed the figure) so parabolic as to carry them far beyond the times of these prophets, and over the head of the kingdoms that then existed, onward to our day, and to the great empires, and the fully developed and firmly consolidated idolatries which, since the corruption of Christianity, have burdened both the East and the West. Their denunciations take aim, so to speak, at these systems. There is one idolatry, in particular, which is compounded of all the paganisms of the ancient world, and which has grafted itself upon the political constitutions of Europe, to which these denunciations have special reference. They all gather in a circle of fire around Rome. She is the successor of the early idolatries. They have given her their seat; they have given her their principles of dominion; they have given her their evil passions; and,

along with these bequests, she inherits also their predicted doom. It is this day,—even the day of *her* fall,—which will synchronise, most probably, with that of the fall of all contemporary idolatries, of which Hosea speaks when he says, “great shall be the day of Jezreel ;” and of which Joel speaks when he foretells, “The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake ;” and of which Amos, too, has made mention,—“ Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light ? even very dark, and no brightness in it ?” Thus do the prophets foretell a day of blessed repose to the Church in time to come ; but they have suspended between us and that day, curtain-like, a cloud of tempest and fire ; and whether we attempt to contemplate that day through the medium of the present state of society, or through prophecy, we can see it not otherwise than “darkly and through a cloud.”

Before the final and literal judgment-day, shall come the literal resurrection ; so before this symbolic judgment-day, shall come a symbolic resurrection. Before the throne on which sat the Ancient of Days, stood “ten thousand times ten thousand,” Daniel tells us: “the judgment was set, and the books were opened”—(Dan. vii. 10). And, speaking of the “time of the end” in another chapter, Daniel says, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt”—(Dan. xii. 2). Referring to the same era, John says, “I saw thrones, and they sat upon

them, and judgment was given unto them ; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"—(Rev. xx. 4).

What do these passages mean ? Do they mean a literal rising, or a moral rising ? Do they mean a rising of the very bodies of the saints,—a resuscitation of their literal bones ? or do they mean simply a resurrection of their cause ? We have no hesitation in saying they mean the latter. They predict a resurrection of principles,—not of bodies.

Let us take an analogous prophecy, and mark how it was fulfilled, not literally, yet nevertheless *really*. It was foretold that, before Christ should appear, Elijah should come again. Did that very Elijah, whom the chariot of fire and horses of fire had carried upward into heaven, return again ? The man did not, but the "power and spirit" of the man did. Elijah lived over again in John. Of such sort is the "resurrection" here foretold. It is a symbol, like all the rest of this symbolic prophecy, but a symbol full of significancy and beauty. The martyrs shall rise at this great day, not in their bones and dust, but in their "spirit and power." By that immutable law of Providence which makes past defeats future victories, and the death of the martyr's body the resurrection of his spirit, "the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of

Jesus" shall rise all over Europe. Huss and Jerome shall come from their stake ; Hamilton and Wishart, Cranmer and Ridley, shall revive from their ashes ; Luther, Calvin, and Knox shall stand up from their graves. The martyrs shall rise from the plains of France, from the snows of the Alps, from the lagunes of Venice, from the fens of Holland, and from the moors of Scotland. They will rise in their memories, that these may be vindicated, and that the cruel sentences which assigned them to the fire may be reversed. They will rise in their principles, that these may be justified as righteous and holy. They will rise in their cause, that it may be acquitted from the condemnation passed on it by man ; and, in the triumph of the systems and Churches founded on the principles for which they died, they will enjoy a lasting and glorious reign with Christ their head. On that day God will roll away the cloud of obloquy that rested above their graves ; their stakes will be converted into thrones ; their names will emerge from the black cloud in which they set ; and through all the ages of the future they will be honoured as the world's greatest benefactors, who handed down the truth by their sufferings and blood ; and so "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

Ah ! we little think what a vast revolution awaits public opinion. Many a star worshipped for ages will one day be found to be a star of darkness. Many a name which the world had canonized, and before which

the knee had long been bent, shall yet be cast out as evil, and left to rot. And many a principle, falsely deemed divine, to which the mind has bowed for ages, will be trodden under foot as pernicious by its votaries, as the poor barbarian breaks in pieces and tramples into the mire of the street the gorgons and hydras he had worshipped in his day of darkness. When that great coming ordeal has passed over the world, what a change ! How many vacant niches in the temple of fame ! How many altars without their divinities ! How many heroes without their laurel ! How many poets and orators without their crown ! The world said, " Ye are gods, but ye shall die as men."

But the firmament of public opinion will not be without its lights, though many of its present luminaries shall set. How utterly unknown to the present race of Frenchmen are their martyrs ! yet these martyrs were the glory of France. They would have saved their country from that terrible series of revolutions and wars which has since passed over it. In this hope they shed their blood. Noble patriots were they, elegant scholars, proficients in every useful art ; and to all their other adornments they added this, the highest of all, that they would have given liberty to France by giving her the gospel. And yet how profoundly ignorant is France of these men, of their great qualities and their nobles deeds ! The same may be said regarding Spain. The same may be said regarding Italy, regarding Belgium ; in fine, of every papal country. But the day will come when honest history shall search

them out, and bring them forth from their unknown or dishonoured graves. The pictured historic scenes of three centuries ago are not obliterated. Superstition has drawn its brush across the canvas, and infidelity has repainted it with modern apostles and philosophers,—with Voltaire and Proudhomme; but the superincumbent layer will yet be removed, and the great worthies of the past will come again into the light, gigantic of stature and noble of mien as ever; neither undimmed in their splendour nor enfeebled in their power by the obscurity in which they have so long dwelt. Their example and principles will rule the future. They shall sit on thrones; they shall shine as stars,—stars which will never lose their brightness, nor ever fall from their place.

But the drama of judgment proceeds. Before the great white throne two companies are seen to stand. The principles of idolatry and despotism shall that day come up for judgment, as well as those of truth and liberty. Equity demands it; and the infallible working of God's providence will bring it to pass. These principles have been upon their trial for ages; and the issue of that trial will on that day be proclaimed from this tribunal in the hearing of the world. They will be found not to abide the fire. The corruption and falsehood of these principles will on that day be conclusively demonstrated; the craft and tyranny by which they have upheld themselves will be thoroughly exposed; their destructive tendency will be traced in the utter disorganization and ruin which will then over-

whelm all the political and religious confederacies which have been founded upon them ; and this will be accomplished by acts so public, and so manifestly judicial, that all will see it to be the judgment of God, not less than if his throne were planted in visible glory in the heavens, and the sentence of doom came uttered by his own omnipotent voice.

This is the resurrection that awaits at that epoch the unrighteous dead. Equal justice shall in this respect be dealt the persecutor and the martyr. As the dust of the one shall sleep in the cave where he died, the moor on which he fell, and the ocean into which his ashes were thrown, till the Saviour's voice shall call it up at the final day ; so the body of the other shall continue to slumber in the trophied tomb, in the emblazoned and heraldic vault, to which he was consigned amid the State's pomps and the Church's benedictions, till that hour when the archangel's trump shall rend heaven and earth. But although his dust shall not rise, his memory shall rise ; his crimes shall rise. The governments and the churches which he upheld by his policy and oppression will become his representatives. When they shall stand before the great bar, he virtually will stand before it ; when they are judged, he is judged ; and when they are overthrown, he is overthrown. Thus, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake . . . to shame and everlasting contempt." And thus, "when the books were opened . . . the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

Two other symbols does the Apocalypse employ to depict this epoch. These symbols give us a clear insight into the causes out of which this epoch springs, the retribution with which it is stamped, and the issues, solemn and lasting, that will flow from it. It is symbolized as a HARVEST and a VINTAGE. We have simply to yield ourselves to the analogy of the symbol, and we are led to its meaning.

The harvest comes not alone ! - It is no more an isolated, unconnected phenomenon in the moral than it is in the natural world. In the first, as in the last, it most surely implies a time of sowing, and a time of springing, and a time of ripening, all going before it. Well, here comes the Harvest of the nations. The sowing is past, and all the intermediate stages are past ; and now has come the time of reaping. And as the nations sowed five centuries, or ten centuries, or twenty centuries before, so shall they now reap. Those which sowed the seed of Divine truth shall reap the harvest of liberty and tranquillity. Those which sowed the seed of despotism in the State, and idolatry in the Church, will on that day reap the harvest of revolution and atheism.

This era is farther symbolized as the Vintage. The figurative uses of the vine in Scripture give an ecclesiastical aspect to this symbol ; but its lesson is easily read. It is, in brief, that those nations which have planted the true vine shall at that day gather good grapes ; while they who have planted the false vine shall then eat the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah.

To complete the symbol, and carry out the ideal drama consistently to its close, we are shown the final award and destinies of the two companies. Both Daniel and John represent this symbolic judgment closing—as the real judgment will close—with a heaven and a hell. On the right of the great white throne is seen a paradise,—a new heavens and a new earth,—into which “the nations of them that are saved” are seen to enter in a grand triumphal procession. On the left of the throne is a pandemonium, into whose fiery lake are cast the nations of the rejected. What does this import? It imports the immortality that will be given to the principles of truth, and the extinction to which are doomed the principles of falsehood. The nations and churches which have framed their constitution and based their policy on Divine revelation shall pass safely through the great ordeal, and, carrying with them their principles of perpetuity, will enter on a career of glorious dominion, amid the blessings of religion and the fruits of liberty, undisturbed by revolution from within or invasion from without,—for then they “shall learn war no more.” On the contrary, those nations and churches which have constituted themselves on error will perish in this ordeal, and, passing away from the earth, will leave their name and memorial as a warning to the ages that are to come after.

Such are the solemnities that are to close the epoch of Antichrist's reign and of the Church's captivity. Casting our eye forward, there is seen at the end of the

dispensation a great white throne, and a vast assembly, wakened, as it were, from their graves by the earthquake shock of revolution, and summoned by the trumpet's voice of Providence into the presence of the great Judge. Those churches which have served Anti-christ shall be cast in the judgment, and assigned to eternal oblivion ; those that have remained faithful to Christ shall be approved, their innocence proclaimed, their fidelity rewarded, and they shall flourish and reign upon the earth. Thus shall the "mystery" of Providence be "finished" by a glorious display of the perfect equity and righteousness of the great Judge.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FOUR MONARCHIES : OR, THE CHURCH'S OPPRESSOR.

WE speak of an exodus awaiting the Church in a future, a happier, and, we trust, a not now distant age. An exodus implies a previous captivity. A captivity there has been,—a captivity whose doleful periods are reckoned not by days, nor by years, but by more than two decades of centuries. As the Church's captivity has been long, so her prison was vast. Come and let us survey it. Let us walk round her dungeon, and mark how lofty its towers and how strong its bulwarks ! Its circuit is large as the earth, which it seems to cover. The area of the four kingdoms was in reality the prison-house of the Church. From the waters of the Atlantic on the one side to the Indian deserts on the other,—from the Arctic snows on the north to the burning sands of the tropics on the south,—was spread out the territory, ample and wide, which, if a scene of dominion and glory to the world-power, was a place of confinement and oppression to the Church. From such a prison there was for the Church no escape, unless she could mount into the sky or dwell beyond the pole.

Nor has the Church even yet wholly escaped from

her imprisonment, or entered into that full enfranchisement and liberty which is her destined inheritance. She waits for redemption. Seasons of respite she has enjoyed ; days of partial freedom she has seen ; such her exodus from Egypt ; such her return from Babylon ; such her triumph over Paganism in primitive times ; such her victory over Rome at the glorious Reformation. But these were rather harbingers than the deliverance itself. The trumpet of her great jubilee has yet to sound. The final blow that is to shiver her chains, and scatter the towers of her gloomy dungeon in the dust, has yet to be struck.

Let us retrace the past three thousand years. It is the sixth century before the birth of Christ. The age is undergoing a change, and the world is plainly passing under a new dispensation. Principles long operative in society, but silently so,—stirring only in individual bosoms or in small communities,—are now beginning to develope themselves on a scale that is altogether new, and to move great confederated masses. In especial, the principles of tyrannical rule, in alliance with image-worship, are now embodying themselves in powerful political associations. Chief among these, and parent of a line of empires, is the great kingdom of Babylon. From her seat on the bosom of the great Chaldean plain, that proud kingdom throws her shadow westward upon Palestine and the regions around it ; the Sheckinah has taken its departure from the temple at Jerusalem ; the Jews are on their way to Babylon ; and the Church, inspired, by these portents, with sad

foreboding, is uttering her plaint through her prophet, “Woe unto us, for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out !”

Before we follow the Church into the captivity into which she is now entering, let us survey her oppressor. His image now begins to be seen in prophecy, as already his shadow falls darkly upon the world. This power is not simple, but complex ; it is not single, but dual. One part is born of earth, and by earthly forces fulfils its mission. Its weapon is the sword. But behind the political organization,—which is all that meets the eye,—or rather inside this organization, there stands a mightier power. That power is not born of earth. That power is spirit ; it is a demon. The political framework of despotic kingdoms was simply the body in which this demon dwelt. It was the hand by which he executed his cruel deeds,—the tongue by which he vented his blasphemous assumptions and promulgated his impious edicts. It was the incarnation of Satan. In the rise and development of the four monarchies, Satan came upon the earth. He came in visible glory, to reign over the nations, and deceive them by the idolatries he set up. The spirit that animated these monarchies was “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil ;” and the deception he practised lay in the polytheisms which he propagated, and by which he led the nations to believe that they were worshipping God, while they were worshipping the devil.

Let us contemplate, first, that political organization under whose dominion the Church now passed ; and,

next, the spiritual power which dwelt in that organization, and which was the Church's real oppressor.

The starry dusk of an eastern night enwraps the great plain of Chaldea. Along the plain, stealing softly onwards, as if it feared to disturb the silence that broods over palm-grove, and slumbering city, and august temple, at whose portals winged bulls keep guard, and from whose top the astrologer vainly watches the orbs of the firmament, rolls the Euphrates. Now it washes the massy ramparts and dark towers of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. Within, asleep on his pillow, lies the lord of the great Babylonian empire. At his gates the guards keep watch. But, however numerous and vigilant, they cannot shut out the anxious thoughts which will at times intrude upon the repose of royal couches. And this night, we know, the king was visited upon his bed by thoughts of what should come to pass hereafter. Suddenly there stands before him a great image. Its "brightness was excellent," and "the form thereof was terrible." On that image the king gazed with mingled admiration and awe. But though Nebuchadnezzar saw, he understood not. When day broke the vision was gone, but not the impression it had made upon his mind. He strove to recall it, but could not. Hastily summoning "the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans," he demanded of them that they should exert their art to the extent of at once revealing and interpreting his dream. Interpret it they would ; but reveal it they could not, even though the monarch, chafed by disappointed curiosity

and tortured by a foreboding terror, denounced death as the penalty of their inability. As the pagan oracles became silent at the coming of Christ, so the soothsayers and wise men of Babylon were struck dumb, to make way, in the royal presence, for a true prophet, who now appears upon the scene.

The words of Daniel have a creative power. They reproduce the dream which had visited the king's pillow, but had fled from the king's memory ; and reproduce it as vividly as it had stood at first before the king. "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee ; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors ; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them ; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth"—(Dan. ii. 31-35).

The interpretation of this vision is a matter of no doubt or difficulty whatever. We know as certainly what the vision symbolizes, as we know that Nebuchadnezzar had such a vision. The same prescience that made known the vision also made known the interpretation ;

a denial of the one therefore is equally a denial of the other. The two rest on the same foundation. First of all we are expressly given to understand that the image, as a whole, represented a long line of empire, and that each separate metal in the image was representative of a distinct and separate kingdom in that line, and that the line embraced four kingdoms in all. Of course, the prophecy by no means implies that these kingdoms were to be the only kingdoms on the earth during their respective eras of flourishing. All that it fairly implies is, that they were to be the most prominent ; that they were to stand successively at the world's head ; that through them the world's historic line was to run on ; and, in especial, that they were to form the main medium for the transmission and development of the two powerful principles of despotism and idolatry which were now entering on their era of domination. Into this earthly colossus was the demon to enter. He was to breathe his own life into it. He was to dazzle the nations with its golden head, and trample them down with its iron legs.

Nor has it been left to inference or to conjecture to determine what are these four kingdoms. The first three have been expressly named : they bear the same titles in Daniel which they bear in history ; and, as regards the fourth, its characteristics are so clearly described, and the relation it was to bear to the rest is such, that it is no more possible to mistake it, although not named, than it is possible to mistake the other three which are named. It is beyond dispute that the head

of the image represents the Chaldean empire, for, says Daniel to its reigning representative,—“Thou art this head of gold”—(Daniel, ii. 38). And in the vision of the “ram” and the “he-goat” of the eighth chapter,—which, as we shall afterwards show, is but a repetition of the vision of the image from a different starting-point, and under new aspects,—we are distinctly told, “The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia, and the rough goat is the king of Grecia”—(Daniel, viii. 20-21). As regards the fourth kingdom, which was to stand up after the others, all who admit the soundness of the interpretation so far—(and how can it be resisted?)—must admit that this kingdom, which was “strong as iron,” represents the Roman Power. If history ever verified anything in Prophecy, it is this: it exhibits a perfect identity betwixt the fourth kingdom in Daniel, which “devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it,” and which was “diverse from all the beasts that were before it,” and the all-conquering, far-extending, unpitying, devastating Roman Power, which rose upon the ruins of the other kingdoms,—which, although diverse from them in the form of its government, was like them in its political and ecclesiastical principles, and is equally entitled with them to be ranked in the great family of the Bestial Powers. To these proofs we may add this consideration, that since the days of Nebuchadnezzar there have been four, and only four, great kingdoms on the earth. These four kingdoms have arisen in the precise order

here foretold. The world is now under the fourth kingdom. We are the witnesses of its disintegration ; it is manifestly far advanced towards its final dissolution ; and we put it to our readers to say whether there is the smallest probability of its ever being succeeded by a fifth. It will have no successor of its own kind. The dynasty of the BEASTS is at an end. The last potentate of their ravening house is being conveyed to the tomb, amid the wailings of some, the execrations of others, and the awakening songs of an earth which has long groaned under their tyranny, and a Church which has travailed in pain to be delivered from the bondage and defilement of their idolatry.

In these two visions,—that of the “Image,” which we have just explained, and that of the “Four Beasts,” which we shall consider in next chapter,—we have the history of the world for some thousands of years. It is given with unequalled brevity, and yet with amazing vividness,—with unerring truth, and yet with matchless comprehensiveness. How perfect the accordance between the image in prophecy and the image which has been left in history ! First comes the stately Babylonian. Under his showy yoke the nations first begin to taste the bitterness of slavery and the miseries of war. The dual power of the Medes and Persians next stands up. Their career is brief but sanguinary ; and their kingdom passes away while yet in the meridian of its power. The fiery and impetuous Greek succeeds ; and by his arts and his language, both so redolent of beauty, he helps to bind into one

the various nations which his kingdom embraced. While the Greek is yet flourishing in arts and philosophy, as in arms, there rises upon him and upon the earth the shadow of a greater Power. Before that shadow the day of Greek dominion and glory speedily declines. Invincible Rome steps upon the stage : she crowds it with her legions. The iron kingdom exalts herself upon the power, and enriches herself with the spoils, of her three predecessors. These renowned predecessors had fought, had won victories, had founded empires ; and now Rome, more renowned still, enters upon their labours. Thus the day of political despotism passes on. Each one of its many eventful stages we can distinctly trace in the dream. We can see its golden morning opening in the East ; its fervid noon attained in the Greek and Roman dominion ; and, last of all, its waning light in the ten kingdoms of Western Europe. The long line runs on, revealing to our sight, as it pursues its course, many a field on which the dead lie heaped,—many a throne, once powerful, now fallen in the dust,—many a dungeon in which the captive pines,—much stage grandeur, no little craft,—many a dark intrigue, many a gigantic crime, many a broken heart ; but with continuous progress of the race nevertheless, order gradually rising out of the chaos, life springing up from the graves of nations, and liberty lifting up her venerable form upon a scene seemingly wholly abandoned to the conflicts of ambition and of war, and attesting thus the presence on the dark scene, though unseen by man, of an omnipotent and

beneficent Power, which guides, according to his own good pleasure, through its many successive stages, to its predestined goal, this high drama, which, but for this controlling hand, would break in pieces and hurry into destruction the world on which it is enacted.

It is worthy of notice that, although these kingdoms were to assume four distinct organizations, one image, and not four, is employed to represent them. We are taught in this the essential oneness of the Power that was to animate this colossal body. For as the image was one, though composed of four metals, the idolatrous and despotic principle was one, though embodied in four empires. These empires, from their rise to their fall, were to constitute one continuous confederacy, and that confederacy idolatrous and despotic ; and with graphic truth are they here depicted, in the unity of their inward life, and the multiform aspects of their outward condition.

In the midst of all the confusion and devastation which these monarchies were to create, we still are able to trace ORDER and PROGRESSION. Standing where we now do, and looking down upon the past twenty-five centuries, we can trace four distinct and strongly-defined stages of progress, corresponding to the four empires which have arisen on the earth. Each successive empire left the race on a higher platform than that on which it found it. First comes the Chaldean empire,—the “head of fine gold.” It was a showy and stately government, but it lacked adaptability. The king was a divinity, but, like all the di-

vinities of those days, a demon of sensuality and wilfulness. The only uses of power and rule then were to glorify the king, and in noways to enlighten and civilize the people. The very bricks picked up at this day on the plain of Chaldea testify to this. They are every one of them stamped with the name of Nebuchadnezzar,—showing that the king was all, and the people nothing. Emphatically might the prophet say to him, “Thou art that head of gold.” He was surrounded with awful mystery, whence he issued his commands ; while the people, sunk in ineffable corruption, and groaning under oppression, heavy but not sharp, heard and obeyed.

Next comes the Medo-Persian Power,—“the breast and arms of silver” in the dream of the monarch, and the “bear” in the night-visions of Daniel. That Power, descending from the mountains of Irak, with bear-like ferocity swept away the golden tyranny and luxurious corruption of the Babylonian empire. Under the new empire mind awoke. The rude shocks it dealt the nations roused them from the stagnancy in which they had ingloriously slumbered. Darius Hystaspes, under whom the Medo-Persian monarchy culminated, was perhaps the greatest sovereign the world had yet seen. His wide victories,—of which the record remains on the rock at Behistun, although deciphered only in these latter days,—tended to unite mankind, and helped to make them feel the common ties that bind them together. Now began the era of HISTORY. The infancy of the race was past. Mankind had begun to

note down their experiences, and to systematize their knowledge, that so, building on the Past, they might attain their Future.

Next came the Greek Power,—the “leopard” of the prophecy ; and under that Power was opened the era of philosophy and of the arts. The victories of Alexander were wider, as well as more rapid, than those of Darius ; and under him and his successors the nations attained to a yet deeper feeling of their common relationships and interests. Greek arms were the pioneers of Greek civilization, and widely was its influence now permeating the earth. The idea of LIBERTY,—to remain an *idea* only for long ages,—was slowly forming itself before the imaginations of mankind. After these short-lived empires came at length their predestined successor,—the mighty and far-extending empire of Rome. The start the world took under the Roman power it needs not that we describe. Gathering up all the forces,—material and political, literary and æsthetic,—of the former empires, it gave them a quickened impulse and a wider development. Under this empire the laying of the secular platform, on which was to be erected the glorious fabric of the world’s liberty and religion, was completed. There came now, in fine, the CHRISTIAN ERA,—the kingdom of the Stone. By these four distinct stages is the world seen advancing, in history as in the prophecy, towards that “endless kingdom” which closes the vista.

How marvellous ! Progress in the midst of these sad confusions : advance, despite these terrible over-

turnings ! What do we behold ? Throne rising against throne ; the conqueror of this hour the captive of the next ; nations reddening the earth with each other's blood ; empires flourishing to-day, but rushing madly to their ruin to-morrow ; war, desolation, and death, in ever-recurring cycles, baffling the efforts and baulking the hopes of men ; and yet, steady progress, nevertheless ! How strange ! How is this ? Look at that noble steam-ship as she ploughs the deep : how steadily she keeps her track to that far distant haven towards which her prow is pointed ! Onward she goes when the sun shines, and ocean around her sleeps in the calm. Onward, too, she goes when the tempest gathers, and the waves rise, and the darkness of night descends upon her path. The tumultuous heavings of the deep cannot turn her from her course ; they scarce have power to retard her speed : often-times they quicken it. How is this ? There is a strong and skilful hand on the helm. What a proof does the world's progress afford of the presence on earth of an Unseen Power, which has watched over the principles of truth and order, preserved them from perishing in ages of violence, and made the moral tempests of the world,—the ambition of kings and the madness of nations,—the means of nurturing these principles into strength, and opening for them a wider sphere to civilize and bless mankind. “The Lord sitteth King upon the flood ; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.” His is the hand which gathers up the thread of all plans, guides the course of all move-

ments, and out of the conflict that prevails on earth, and which to human eye appears to tend no nearer to unity, and gives no promise of resulting in order, evolves at last a sublime and beneficent end. " Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty ; give unto the Lord glory and strength. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters : the God of glory thundereth : the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars : yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. In his temple doth every one speak of his glory. The Lord will give strength unto his people : the Lord will bless his people with peace."

Let us mark, in fine, how great the power here shown in producing so great a picture by so few strokes. As a painting, how graphic is the dream of Nebuchadnezzar ! As a history, how comprehensive ! And as a philosophy, how profound ! In the few verses in which that dream is recorded, we have the whole history of the world from Nebuchadnezzar's days to our own. As afterwards in history, so here in prophecy, we can trace empire in its westward track, from the plain of Chaldea, where the morning opened so brightly upon it, to the shores of Europe, where we now behold the evening closing in around it, as it was foretold it would, thick and lurid with the storms of revolution.

Not the order only in which these kingdoms were to arise, not the more memorable conquests of their arms only, but the predominating genius and the leading characteristics of each, are here given with singular

vividness and unerring precision. The outline is sharply cut. We catch the image of the time; nay, almost the features of its individual men. The photograph can strike in a moment the likeness of a whole army, as well as that of one man. Let us take a microscope and survey that image. It opens out into the dimensions of the living army. We can resolve the host into its several ranks,—its several ranks into their individual soldiers. So it is here. This dream photographed twenty-five centuries at a stroke. The great future it put before us in miniature. And when we take the microscope of history and examine the picture, each individual event stands out in full body before us. Every kingdom, and throne, and battle, is seen to be embraced in the dream, and comes vividly into view. The pages of Herodotus and Zenophon, of Livy and Tacitus, of Gibbon and Niebuhr, are but the reproduction on a magnified scale of what was first of all exhibited by Daniel. What have all ages since been, but an unrolling of this prophetic scroll? The thousands of volumes of history which the world contains, what are they but interpretations of this dream? What a proof that none but Omniscience could have constructed this dream! He who coiled up the future oak within the acorn's narrow bound, and within that diminutive yet perfect tree coiled up another more diminutive still, but perfect also, and within that one another, and another, in unending series,—He only could have put the history of a world into the compass of a brief dream.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOUR BEASTS.

LET us turn to the second figuration. It gives us a deeper insight into the real character of the era. The bestial and tyrannical principles that were to dominate on the earth during the period which the vision embraces are set before us by symbols not to be misunderstood.

It is a holy prophet to whom the revelation this time is made. "Daniel had a dream, and visions of his head upon his bed." But mark how gloomily the vision is draped. A dark sea, the "four winds" warring in its sky, and the great billows rolling on its surface. How manifest is it that "the time is out of joint;" that some disturbing principle has entered into nature; and that its elements are striving fiercely, as if they laboured to cast out the evil principle which has marred their purity and broken their repose! How different the world of the vision from the world over which the Divine Voice pronounced that it was "very good."

We have surveyed the stage, shrouded in cloud and buffeted with storm, on which the "four beasts" were

about to appear,—fit symbol of the political world as it existed at the period of the rise and during the currency of the “four monarchies.” The evil passions which gave birth to these kingdoms had long been working in society ; but now they had risen to the surface, and the nations were beginning to swell and heave, as rolls the ocean when the great winds of heaven strive upon it. Four portentous shapes were seen to lift up their heads amid the angry billows. We shall leave the man who was the witness of their rise to describe them.

“ In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed : then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings : I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it : and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had also four heads ; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceed-

ingly ; and it had great iron teeth : it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it : and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it ; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots : and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things”—(Dan. vii. 1-8).

It cannot but strike us as remarkable, that, while it is the same epoch that is figured in both visions, the symbolization in each should be so widely different. An image whose “brightness was excellent,” and whose “form was terrible,” is selected as the symbol to present the world-power to the king. Four beasts, monstrous of shape, inappeasably cruel, and insatiably bloodthirsty, were employed to shadow it forth to the prophet. Why this difference ? This difference imports the different stand-point from which the world-power was viewed by the king and by the prophet. Nebuchadnezzar looked up to it from the low stand-point of earth ; Daniel looked down upon it from the high stand-point of heaven. The monarch saw it as it seems : the prophet saw it as it is. The one beheld only its outward glitter and show : the other’s eye pierced its thin lacquering, and penetrated its inner principles. To Nebuchadnezzar this image was the embodiment of his highest ideal of all that was stable, august, and glorious. To Daniel, who saw the pride, ambition, and idolatry of the world-power, the symbol

embodied all that to him was disgusting by its baseness, revolting by its cruelty, and hideous by its crimes.

So, still, does the world judge of earthly dominion. The "kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them," has passed into a proverb. The very climax of human grandeur is a "throne." Higher the man of the world cannot climb. Beyond there lies nothing for his ambition to covet or his arms to conquer. And to see the world-power seated there, amid the blaze of purple and gold, with riches to minister to its wishes, armies to execute its behests, victory standing by to crown it with its laurel, and fame, with its trumpet, to blazon its deeds, does indeed look imposing. No wonder that the world falls down and worships.

But the Christian surveys it with other eyes. He sees that its origin is base, that its work is vile, that its foundation is unstable, and that its end will be fearful. All this holds true especially of the four monarchies symbolized in vision to Daniel. We do not overlook the progress made by the race in arts and civilization during the ages of their domination ; but that progress was insignificant and slow ; and it was the result rather of an overruling Providence than of any intelligent purpose or well-directed aim on the part of these dynasties. The rulers of these kingdoms had in view but one object, and that object the extension of their own dominion, at the expense of a hideous devastation of the earth, and a boundless effusion of human blood. The wisdom that makes a throne glorious, the justice that makes law venerable, the liberty

that makes a realm happy, the virtue that makes a nation great, were unknown to them, or, rather, were despised by them. Their one attribute was force,—force to subdue, and force to retain. But force is the attribute of the brute, and fitly therefore was the brute selected beforehand as their symbol.

Farther, how remarkable is it that the world-power should have been made the prophet of its own downfall ! Out of its own mouth comes the first intimation of its latter end. While foreseeing and foretelling the long career of power and oppression that was before the image, Nebuchadnezzar also foresees and foretells the terrible end that was awaiting it. “Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.” How instructive and how affecting ! Proudly as the world-power here rises before us, its feet planted firmly on the earth, and its head among the stars, the writing of destiny is blazoned on its brow. The first sentence has already passed upon it,—“Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return.” That sentence is rolled from off redeemed man, and made to recoil on Satan and his works. The devil had dashed man’s opening day in paradise with the darkness of the grave, and now the opening day of his own dominion on earth is dashed with the sevenfold blackness of inevitable destruction. Afar off the world-power sees the abyss towards which it is advancing ; and it knows that, mount upwards as it may, into this abyss must it descend at last, and

here must all its glory be swallowed up. Not a vestige of its greatness shall one day remain on earth, even as not a single grain was left of that heap of dust into which the stone ground the image when the winds arose. Every hour of its day has this shadow been on its path. Ever at its heart has lain this augury of coming evil. From father to son has the tradition been handed down in its house, that there was a greater power in the world, before which it was destined to fall. And hence the jealousy with which it has ever watched the truth, and the paroxysms of fear and rage into which it has been thrown by the progress of Christ's kingdom. In that progress it has heard the advancing footsteps of its own doom. Oh, what force in the exhortation, "Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased : for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away ; his glory shall not descend after him!" "What an abyss," is said to have been the dying confession of a great conqueror, whom we may therein view as spokesman of that imperial corporate body of which he formed a part, and which the image shadowed forth,—"What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and is still extending over the whole earth!"

We remark, in fine, that this dark dispensation now opening could not be avoided in accordance with the laws of the Divine government. The cup could by no means pass away from either the Church or the world. Evil once planted cannot be summarily eradi-

cated. It had been planted : it was planted in paradise ; and it must be allowed to spring up, to grow, to wax great, to cover the earth with its boughs, to blossom and bear fruit, and then to die of very rottenness. The early maturity and triumph of evil is its only and sure undoing. “ When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.” Truth, struggling the while against unfriendly influences, and compelled to fight for every inch of advance, is disciplined by these very conflicts into a hardness of vigour and a fulness of experience which fit it at last for endless dominion. This is the crown it covets. The long centuries of the future are its period of flourishing. It is Error’s wont to shoot up into early and rank luxuriance ; but long after its glory lies withered like the grass, Truth shall live, its mighty trunk rooted firmly in the earth, and its immortal bough proudly outspread in heaven.

In truth, this doleful epoch was the world’s fall,— its fully realized and consummated fall. The world knew not at the time, nor till ages afterwards, the frightful extent of the damage it had sustained in paradise. In that garden did it deposit the little seed of idolatry ; but never would it have known how inveterately malignant was that seedling, had it not shot up into a system of political and ecclesiastical despotism, which grew apace as the ages passed on, till at last it overshadowed the earth, quenching every ray of light, and extinguishing every vestige of liberty. All

this time had the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge been working in the world. Five millenniums and more were required fully to indoctrinate man in the lessons of that Tree. What he sought when he plucked its fruit was the knowledge of good and evil. He now knew good and evil. The long and bitter experience of ages had taught him this knowledge. His eyes were now opened. But on what a scene were they opened ! The earth was full of darkness ; the path to heaven was lost ; the nations wandered blindfold ; a foul and debasing system of demonology had displaced the pure, spiritual, and elevating worship of the true God ; and a hideous and blasphemous Power sat enthroned amid the wrecks of liberty and knowledge, and wielded over the bodies and the souls of men an irresponsible and uncontrollable authority. The world could not but see now that it was fallen. The act of obeisance rendered by Eve to the Serpent in the garden, repeated, as it now was, on a wider stage, had reached a climax of iniquity, and opened out into a pandemonium of misery, which, but for man's actual experience of the fact, would never have been deemed possible. A whole world lay sunk in the worship of the Old Serpent.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DRAGON : OR, THE CHURCH'S REAL OPPRESSOR.

FROM the beginning there have been two, and only two, principles on the earth,—the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan. These two kingdoms have striven unceasingly with each other for the mastery. The Bible is the record of this war. Earth is its seat ; but its origin and first beginning was not on earth, but in the invisible world. From that world has every movement in this momentous conflict continued to be directed. The two leaders in this war are discovered to us on the first page of the Bible, as the “Seed of the Woman” and the “Seed of the Serpent.” Under these two chiefs are ranged the respective hosts. As the battle advances, we catch sight of them at intervals ; and on the last page of the Bible, when the conflict is closing, the two great combatants are seen openly in their true character,—Christ on the one side, and the Devil on the other.

But spiritual powers cannot, as such, conflict together on the earth. It is necessary that they should embody themselves in a material organization, and by its instrumentality carry on the war. That they would

so embody themselves, is intimated to us in terms no-ways obscure, at the very commencement of the strife, when Christ is spoken of as the "Seed of the Woman," and the Devil is described as the "Seed of the Serpent." The organization in which Christ dwelt was the Church: the organization Satan formed for himself was the great idolatrous confederacy, or false Church. Such were the two antagonists as man's eye beheld them. But the real antagonists were invisible. The real conflict was betwixt the two spiritual powers which were represented by these two visible organizations.

In this contest the kingdom of Satan got the start, and far outstripped the kingdom of Christ. That kingdom was but of slow growth. It grew up amid a silence so profound, and attracted adherents so few, that its presence was scarce recognised on that earth which it was afterwards to reign over. No so the rival and antagonist kingdom. It rapidly enlarged. It spread abroad with portentous increase, from the rising to the setting sun; and, in the course of the rapid ages, came to embrace within its ample pale all thrones and all nations. While the Church was still a feeble society, totally without power beyond the precincts of its own little territory, the politico-idolatrous power, its rival and destined enslaver, was subjugating the world by its arms, ruling it by its spirit, and captivating it by the dazzling splendour of its rites. It had won the battle, as it thought. Let us trace the arts by which idolatry achieved this early and marvellous success.

Had the seduction of wealth, the incentives of passion, and the coercion of power, been wanting to idolatry, its followers would have been fewer, and its success less signal. Of this Satan was aware. He looked around on existing social and political organizations, and he selected that one which seemed best fitted to serve his purpose, as an instrument through which to work. Government, an ordinance of God, and as such having a basis of power in the natural conscience, Satan appropriated, and, so to speak, consecrated, to his own designs. He repeated the tactics he had employed with so signal a success for himself, and so fatal a result for man, in the garden of Eden. At the foot of the tree Satan coiled himself into the body of the serpent, and through this vehicle assailed the woman. Plotting a second fall for the world, he crouched down, and crept into the body of the political power. That organization was to him the great mouth through which he spake, and the iron hand by which he executed his bloody decrees. Ever since that time, the two—idolatry and empire—have lived in strictest alliance. Together have they journeyed over the earth, going from kingdom to kingdom, and from one nation to another people. Wherever the one planted its throne, there the other set up its altar. The alliance has resulted in reciprocal benefits, and has been inflexibly maintained. Idolatry lent its sanctions to empire, and empire gave its power to idolatry. And therefore it has come to pass, that as empire grew idolatry grew, and where empire culminated, there too

idolatry culminated. They have risen in the world precisely as they were seen to rise in the vision,—not as two, but as one ; empire the external framework,—idolatry the animating soul. This soul it was that shaped empire's course, that taught it its craft, prompted its deeds, inspired it with its terrible strength, bowed the soul of man before it, and gave it, at last, dominion, and glory, and power, that all nations, languages, and kindreds should serve it.

In the same region, near the site of the ancient paradise, grew up the true and the false,—the worship of God and the worship of idols. In Chaldea was beheld the first great empire of the world. Founded by Nimrod, and rising by rapid strides, it culminated under Nebuchadnezzar. In Chaldea, too, was witnessed the first great idolatry of the world. So near to each other were laid the foundations of those two kingdoms, so diverse in their character, and fated to be so divided in their lives,—the one to reach by rapid strides its meridian, and then pass away for ever ; the other to toil upwards, through long and terrible struggles, to the perpetual empire of the world. Coeval in birth, these two have been almost always contemporaneous in their grand epochs of development and progress.

In Chaldea, idolatry was the worship of the GRAND and the SUBLIME. Wary and cunning Satan let man down by easy stages into the abyss of creature-worship. He began with the most resplendent of material things,—the orbs of heaven. The level plain of Chaldea presented to the eye no great object : men were therefore

left at liberty to contemplate the lights of the firmament. The tranquil splendour with which they shone, the regularity with which they moved across the sky, and the beneficence of their functions, made them the meetest representatives of their Maker. To them, therefore, Satan taught man to kneel. His guilty heart made him willing to accept them, first as the media of his worship ; and, as the darkness of his understanding increased, he no longer made them the media merely, but the direct recipients, of his worship. To this earliest form of idolatry we find Job referring :—“ If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand ; this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for I should have denied the God that is above”—(Job, xxxi. 26-28).

So long as Chaldea continued to be the seat of empire,—first under the Babylonian monarchs, and next under the Medo-Persian kings,—it continued also to be the chief seat of the false worship. But soon empire removed to a land that lay more to the West. The conquests of Alexander the Great transferred the seat of power from Asia to Greece. Thither, too, did idolatry transfer itself. The land into which it had now come was not like the land it had left. It was a land of romantic hills and lovely valleys. It was a land of fountains, of shady groves, of bold promontories, of sounding shores. The climate was voluptuous, and prompted men to the enjoyment of the sensuous. The race was young and susceptible ; full of

yearnings after the mysterious, and of love for the beautiful. In Greece, accordingly, idolatry became the worship of BEAUTY and PASSION. By this step it came down to earth, as it were. From being the worship of bodies celestial, it now became the worship of bodies terrestrial. Ignorant of the one true God,—eternal, infinite, omnipresent,—by whom the whole order of nature was maintained, the Greek peopled all nature with gods. To his fervid imagination, principles became persons, impulses became divinities. Wherever he saw a movement in nature,—whether it was the rising of the sun, the flowing of the tide, the blowing of the winds, or the springing of the earth,—there he saw a god. And the same imagination which had given existence to these “gods many,” assigned them their functions, and clothed them with their attributes ; and then the Greek bowed down to them in fervent but licentious worship. This Polytheism was the state-religion of Greece ; Olympus was its throne. The beauty of Grecian art, the subtlety of Grecian philosophy, and the triumph of Grecian arms, were all employed to extend the sway and uphold the worship of these deities. These were not new deities. They were the very gods which had been adored in the temples of Baal, on the great Babylonian plain. For the same powers or demons which the Chaldean had worshipped in the sun and heavenly bodies, the Greek worshipped in the various processes of nature. Only now, dwelling in a fairer clime, and amongst a livelier people, these deities could boast legends of richer

poetry, statues of more perfect beauty, and temples of nobler grace. It was old idolatry beautified by Greek genius.

But empire moved westward still. The Macedonian kingdom had fulfilled its term ; and Rome, the last and mightiest of the Four Monarchies, stood up in its room. Idolatry followed in the wake of empire. Quitting Olympus, it fixed its seat on the Capitol, where, as one of their own poets vainly said, the Romans had built for it “an eternal home.”

When idolatry changed its country, it changed at the same time its form. In Italy it dropped the garb of beauty it had worn in Greece. The race by this time was getting older, and therefore soberer and more practical. Dismissing the idealistic creations of the Greek, the Roman betook him to the more substantial acquisitions of conquest and dominion. As ever happens with fallen man, his gods were, like himself, martial, ferocious, sanguinary. They revelled in the heavens in battles and contests for dominion, just as man, after their example, revelled on the earth. In Rome, therefore, idolatry became the worship of ORDER and DOMINION,—of heroes and conquerors.

Let it be marked that, while the inner principle of idolatry remained the same, the outer form became ever grosser and viler. That inner principle was the worship of invisible deities or demons, which were believed to animate all nature, and to carry on the government of the world. In the first ages men had placed these deities in the sun and heavenly bodies :

in the next age they had brought them down to earth, and lodged them in the powers of nature. And now these divinities were supposed to animate heroes and kings ; and thus had man come to deify himself. A viler idolatry now held in bondage the human race. So far had the promise given by Satan to our first parents in Eden, “ Ye shall be as gods,” advanced towards its fulfilment, although a more complete and perfect fulfilment of it yet awaited the world.

The whole power of the empire was subordinated to the religion of the empire. The creations of genius, the efforts of art, the swords of the legions, the edicts of the senate, the will of the emperor, were all employed to uphold it. Idolatry was the all-pervasive principle that gave unity to the mighty fabric of the empire. Its influence was felt from Rome to the extremities of that immense territory which Rome governed. It ran down through all ranks, from the palace on the Palatine to the hut by the Danube ; and it controlled all affairs, from the consultations of the college of augurs and the deliberations of the senate, to the games of the circus and the brawls of the tavern. It was the centre-point from which the empire worked outwards. It was its life. From it the head of the State borrowed his title of supreme dignity. From it he received his most august functions. He was great as *imperator*, he was greater still as *pontifex maximus*. Cæsar was but the high priest and servant of Jupiter. The framework of the empire was in truth but the body of the demon. He possessed, moved, directed it ; and on his supreme

seat upon the capitol he received the homage of earth's, kindreds, nations, and languages. It was now that idolatry in its pagan form culminated.

But in course of time idolatry demoralized and embruted the Roman, as it had already emasculated the Greek. The Goths, fresh from their native forests, rushed down upon the empire ; and these hardy sons of the north wrested from hands now palsied with superstition and vice, the sceptre of the world. But, though the empire of Rome fell, the empire of idolatry did not fall. The sword of the Goths, which had slain the "beast with the seven heads,"—the pagan empire of Rome, the body which the old serpent inhabited,—had no power over that demon itself. That demon still lived ; and, crouching down as aforetime, he crept back into the Gothic kingdoms which arose upon the ruins of the Roman empire. Rome pagan was gone ; it had been wounded to death ; but idolatry had power to heal the wound, and to cause the dead empire to live, by reviving it in its papal form. It is to the idolatrous principle that we owe the second empire,—the Rome papal that stood up after Rome pagan had gone to its tomb. In it idolatry found a second body,—a new political framework, through which to work upon the nations ; and for this era of its existence was reserved, as we now proceed to show, its proudest triumphs, and, along with these, the deepest enthralment of its subject nations.

A new and mixed race now occupied the area of the Roman empire. They had been received into the

Christian Church without any instruction, nay, without the renunciation, save in name, of the gods which they and their fathers had served beyond the Danube. Here was a soil exceedingly favourable for the revival of idolatry. Wary and skilful, the old sorceress began to ply the new people with her arts. Like her prototype Jezebel, she strove to hide her withered charms, by painting her face, and decking herself with ornaments stolen from Christianity. Her pagan lineage, however, could not be concealed. Her idolatrous propensities and instincts broke through their thin disguise, and betrayed her. The demon unveiled, one by one, his old lineaments to the world ; and when at last he stood fully revealed, "as face answereth to face," so did the features of papal idolatry answer to those of pagan idolatry. As Paganism had hated the one true religion, and pursued it with edicts and stakes, so Popery singled out Christianity, and rested not till it had chased it to the remote and mountainous regions of the empire. The very same objects of worship were restored. The very deities or demons which had been worshipped in the heroes and emperors of pagan times, began again to be worshipped in the saints and popes of papal times. The old rites were restored. The old festivals were re-enacted. The flowers, the incensings, the lustral water, the vestments, the statues, the incantations, the very gods, but with new names, which had been employed in the worship of Paganism, were again revived in the Christian Church. In short, had an old pagan risen from the grave, he could have de-

tected no change, and would certainly have believed that the old religion was still flourishing, and that Jupiter continued to be worshipped under the name of Peter, and Venus under that of Mary. In our day Rome has herself furnished the proof of the perfect identity betwixt modern Popery and ancient Paganism. That proof is the decree of the "Immaculate Conception." The dogma of the "Immaculate Conception" declares Mary truly "divine," and places her upon the altars of Romanism as practically the sole and supreme object of worship. Thus has Popery developed dogmatically, as it had long since developed practically, into a system of creature worship. The same earthly, sensuous, and polluting Polytheism, whose "cradle was rocked" by the soothsayers and star-gazers of Chaldea,—whose youth was passed amid the olive groves and beautiful temples of Greece,—whose manhood was reached amid the stern contests and martial sounds of imperial Rome,—has revived anew in the Popery of the so-called Christian Rome.

The idolatrous principle did not revive simply: it took a new start. It laid hold on deeper principles; it armed itself with forces unknown to it till now. Soon, in consequence, it reached a height of dominion it had never attained even in pagan times. A few words will suffice to state the new principles on which old Paganism now cast itself, and the unbounded rule to which it was thereby raised.

It is conceded, first, that there is a God, the Creator of all things, and by just and lawful prerogative the

Ruler of all things. On the throne of the universe he sits,—the King eternal, immortal, invisible. It is conceded, second, that the Father has made a delegation of this authority to the Son. It is his crown,—his reward for his work as Mediator. “Sit thou here on my right hand.” God has made his Son Head of the Church ; and he has made him Head of the world for the Church. The Father has put in subjection to the Son, as Mediator, all powers and principalities in heaven, all thrones and dominions on earth. Nay, the very elements of nature, and the very beasts of the field, have been put under him as Head of the Church, and for the Church. So far the theory of the Papacy, and so far it is a glorious truth. But at this point, according to its usual wont, it dextrously and cunningly displaces the truth, and substitutes an enormous and destructive error. The Romanist teaches that there has been a second delegation of the sovereignty of the universe. He teaches that, as God the Father made Christ Head of the Church, and Head of the world for the Church, so Christ, in like manner, has made the Pope head of the Church, and head of the world for the Church. The argument, in brief, is, that Christ made Peter his successor and vicar on earth, when he said to him, “Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church.” These words, they hold, conveyed to Peter, as Christ’s representative on earth, the whole principalities and prerogatives of the Saviour ; and through Peter these whole principalities and prerogatives have been conveyed to all Peter’s successors in the chair at

Rome. With this chair, in short, the pontiffs receive the whole spiritual, moral, and temporal sovereignty of Christ. Here, then, is a mightier seat than Cæsar's. In getting hold of the chair of Peter, the Pope has got hold of the sovereignty of the world. He says, I am here as God's vicegerent ; I am God on earth ; and I govern the world as God would govern it were He here in person. Now it was that the world beheld the full development of the Fall. Now it saw the perfect accomplishment of the Tempter's words, in the only sense in which he meant that they ever should be accomplished,—“Ye shall be as gods.”

This theory leaves nothing that is not put under the feet of the pontiff. It puts every minister in the Church under his feet ; for it makes him sole and universal head of the Church. It puts every throne on earth under his feet ; for it makes him head over the world for the Church. It puts the liberty of every state under his feet ; for every kingdom in Europe is but a fief of the papal chair. It puts the conscience and faith of every man under his feet ; for it forbids any one to believe but as the Pope shall teach. It puts the moral law under his feet ; for it vests the Pope in the power of infallible decision, so that he may annul or confirm the decalogue as he pleases. It puts the Bible under his feet, for it makes him the sole interpreter of it. It puts the throne of God under his feet ; for it clothes him with infallibility. It puts upon him the robe of the Eternal. He, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. In a

word, it exhibits the pontiff as the great and only Power in the universe. It plants his foot, not only upon all authority and power on earth, upon all the liberties of nations, upon all the rights of society, upon the understanding, the will, the body, the soul of man, but upon the august prerogatives and eternal dominion of God himself. Such, then, as fairly judged by her essential principles and undeniable creed, is the aim of the Papacy,—dominion uncontrolled and uncontrollable ; power, without limit and without end, over all beings and over all things ; and any other despotism that ever existed, placed alongside the measureless despotism of the Papacy, is insignificant and harmless. Thus has that idolatrous principle which entered into the world at the Fall, and which ever since has been working upwards, first through the star-worship of Chaldea, next through the polytheism of Greece, and, lastly, through the pantheism of Rome, received its widest earthly development, and attained its highest earthly dominion, in the Popery of modern Europe.

Nor is this all. Fully to trace the lineage of Popery, we must go back to a yet more ancient date. Of it, as John Bunyan of "Vanity Fair," we may say,— "This is no new erected business, but a thing of ancient standing." It existed, as we have shown, before a stone was laid in the Eternal City. It is older than the oldest kingdom now on the earth. Its origin goes back to an antiquity more remote than even that of the long-perished kingdoms of Nineveh and Babylon. Its first root and conception was in the breast of Satan

himself. The Papacy is manifestly neither more nor less than a continuation of that scheme of rebellion which Lucifer, then an archangel, hatched and set on foot in heaven, with the view of dethroning God and ruling in his stead, and to which he made so many perverts among his fellow-angels,—doubtless by the same wiles, delusive hopes, and perfidious promises, by which he still makes perverts on earth. Popery points to the same grand and terrible issue. It cannot be bounded by earth : the scheme cannot stop when time stops. It must necessarily develop into the universal enthronement of evil. Why should not He who, “as God, sitteth in the temple of God” on earth, as God, sit in the temple of God in heaven ? It is undeniably and manifestly the very same scheme of rebellion transferred to earth ; only, whereas in those days Satan was his own vicar,—Pope himself, so to speak,—he now needs for that part of the war of which earth is the scene, a human representative, a flesh-and-blood vicar ; and that post the Pope has the honour of filling. But the scheme, in its real character, in its essential guilt, and in its final aim, is demonstrably the same. The annihilation of liberty and virtue which the Papacy would effect on earth would be but the stepping-stone to mount the throne of heaven. And then the universe, now an empire of liberty under God, would become a vast despotism under the Devil.

This, which is the whole truth regarding Popery, gives us a marvellous insight into the symbolical drama of the Apocalypse. The real actor on that scene, from

first to last, is the Old Serpent, the Devil. He is ever behind the scenes ; and other agents act simply as he moves and inspires them. This is the uniform representation of the Apocalypse. The great conflict of that book is betwixt Michael or Christ on the one side, and the Dragon or the Devil on the other ; and the other agents, angelic and human, are only subordinate. The Dragon appears persecuting the primitive Church ; for "the great red dragon," with "seven heads and ten horns," of the twelfth chapter of Revelation, which stood before the woman, ready to devour her man-child as soon as he was born, we are expressly told, was "that Old Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,"—that is, the Devil in the body of the pagan empire. When the drama passes to papal times, and the Roman empire revives in the ten Gothic kingdoms, it is seen to be the same dragon that animates them, and carries on the war against the saints. It was the "dragon,"—the same red dragon that inspired pagan Rome,—that "gave power to the beast" of the papal empire. And when the war closes in the great victory of Michael, who is it who is beheld taken captive on the field, bound in chains, and cast into the lake of fire along with the beast and the false prophet ? It is the Dragon. Nor is this all : the term "old dragon" implies a former appearance, and one very remote in time. Yes, he had been seen six thousand years before. His first appearance was in Eden : there he is seen in company with a "beast,"—the serpent,—tempting Eve. Thus the serpent of the

Apocalypse is the Old Serpent,—the same which appeared in paradise, and there began the war which we see in the Apocalypse closing disastrously for him who had commenced it. But we have just shown that idolatry has been one and the same all throughout, from its first germination in Eden to its culmination in the Popery of modern Europe. And in full harmony therewith, it is the same “old serpent” which deceived Eve, which is represented in the Apocalypse as deceiving the nations in the times of Greece and Rome, and again deceiving them under papal Rome. What an accuracy and propriety belong to the symbols of the Apocalypse ! How true are they to both spiritual and historical fact !

Thus, by the help of the Apocalypse, we can trace the war, from its rise in Eden to its very close. On the first page of the Bible we see the serpent winning his first victory ; on its last page we behold the terrible spectacle of his final overthrow. We see Michael and his angels, and the Devil and his angels, close in mortal combat. They fight for the empire of a world. From this field must emerge a future of slavery or a future of liberty to the race of man. We watch with intensest anxiety the issue of the contest ; we listen to the shouts of the combatants ; we mark the struggling legions as now they advance and now retreat in the tide of battle. Conspicuous on the field, in the thick of the fight, is the rider on the white horse. His foes give way before him. They are routed ; they flee ; their leader, Apollyon, is seized, is thrown into chains ; and, with his two companions, the beast and

the false prophet, he is thrown into the lake, as formerly he had been hurled out of heaven, with his partners in rebellion, the fallen angels. The shout of victory rings over the globe, for now, freed from its great deceiver and oppressor, the weary earth enters upon its rest.

Thus the Bible is a development of Satan in his person, his wiles, his victories, his final defeat,—just as it is a development of Christ in his person, his offices, his sufferings, and his glorious victory. Without its last book, how incomplete would the Bible have been? Without the *Apocalypse*, the Bible would have been a magnificent drama wanting the closing act. Without the *Apocalypse*, the curtain would have dropped on a war of six thousand years' duration, when on the very eve of its last and decisive conflict. We should not have known, after all, which of the two combatants remained master of the field. Had the Bible contained a history, unfinished and broken off after this fashion, we should have been tempted to think that part of Divine Revelation had been lost, or that a last and supplementary chapter yet remained to be given. As it is, the history is finished and complete. *Genesis* is not more its natural Alpha than *Revelation* is its natural Omega; and significantly therefore does its canon shut up with an anathema on him who shall add thereto, or who shall take therefrom.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE BONDAGE : OR, THE “SEVEN TIMES.”

THE Church is on the eve of going down into her Egypt. Let us accompany her thither. Unspeakably bitter, alas ! is the bondage that awaits her there. Sackcloth must be her clothing ; tears her drink ; and long ages must pass over her before she can return from this land of sorrow. But the bow will be ever in the cloud of that dark night : the oath sworn to her will be renewed at each new epoch of her bondage : “ The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed.” The kings which have warred against thee shall come to nought, and the empires which have sought thy life shall utterly perish ; “ but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.” But if the Church must wait for her second exodus nearly seven times longer than she waited for her first, that exodus, when it comes, will be final and complete. Her great exodus will not need to be repeated, because it will be followed by no second bondage. The great trumpet which shall then

be blown will sound the morning of an everlasting deliverance. When she has come up from the deeps of that devouring sea, and stands triumphant on its shore, it will be said to her, "the" enemies "whom you have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever."

When shall come the end of this epoch of bondage? This is the great question that occupies us here. In order to determine this question, it is necessary to determine another and a preliminary one. Were it a voyage across the Atlantic, and were it the question, When shall we see the shores of the New World? the best answer to that question would be to ask, When did we lift the anchor on the strand of England? How many days have we been out? The question before us here is, When shall we see the close of the Church's night? We answer this by asking, When did that night begin? To determine the precise year or day when this epoch began may not be easy,—may not even be practicable. This difficulty arises, not from any want of exactness in the decree that fixed the limits of the prophetic epochs, nor from any irregularity in the revolution of these epochs. With the same precision with which the day rises and sets do the prophetic eras open and close. The one numbers, it may be, more centuries than the other does hours; in the epoch before us it is especially so. That, however, affects not in the slightest the precision with which the epoch fulfils its term. A thousand years are with the Lord as one day. But ancient chronology is uncertain: errors have crept into the calendars of the

various nations ; our chance of error is therefore increased in proportion as our calculation is lengthened ; and, with the greater epochs of prophecy, as with the far voyagers of the sky, approximation is all that can be attained as yet, or reasonably asked. Besides, in Providence as in nature, all great transitions are accomplished in silence. A new principle is deposited in society, and out of that principle comes in due time a new age. The transition is accomplished when the principle is deposited, not when the age is evolved. From that moment dates the era, just as the day dates from the passage of the sun across the nadir, or as the tide dates from the first stirring of the waters in the middle depths of ocean.

But though the precise year may be somewhat doubtful, not so the generation that saw the bondage begin. God set up great monuments to commemorate its commencement, and these monuments are still seen towering across the intervening ages. Let us recall the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. The image that stood before him in his sleep was the symbol of that epoch. Now, mark Daniel's words to the king when interpreting the dream. "Thou art this head of gold"—(Dan. ii. 38). But if the image was the epoch, and if Nebuchadnezzar was the head of the image, how manifest is it that in the days of Nebuchadnezzar the epoch had begun ! Nebuchadnezzar saw the vision in the year 603 B.C. ; and in that year, beyond peradventure, the Church had entered into her long captivity.

But we are disposed to date the commencement of

this epoch a full century earlier. In order to see the grounds on which we do so, let us return to the night-vision of Daniel. To him the four monarchies were presented under the symbol of four wild beasts. The question comes therefore to be, When did these monarchies begin to act the part of the wild beasts? When did the great Assyro-Chaldean monarchy (the lion of the vision) descend upon the fold of the Church, and, like the boar from the forest, lay waste the vine God had brought from Egypt? The eye is at once fixed upon the invasion of Shalmaneser, and the captivity of the ten tribes,—the great outstanding event of the time. This was the first public act of persecution perpetrated on the Church by the world-power. This was the commencement of that policy of violence which lasted, with short intervals, through many dreary centuries. Manifestly the world-power was now dominant, and the Church had descended into a state of subjection.

It will scarce be objected that this outrage was the act of the Assyrian, and not of the Babylonian monarch; for the two kingdoms were properly one. They had a common origin; they had a common idolatry; their governments, though at times distinct and separate, were more frequently conjoined. The seat of the conjoined government was sometimes at Babylon, and sometimes at Nineveh. The era of “trouble and darkness” about to overtake the Church was sometimes foretold as to arise from Babylon, and sometimes as to arise from Assyria; showing that by the Spirit of pro-

phecy these kingdoms were regarded as one. Nay, in many of the prophecies, Assyria stands alone as the predestined enslaver of the Church. We might cite nearly all the earlier prophecies of Isaiah as examples. The following words, for instance, were uttered against Judah :—"Now, therefore, behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the King of Assyria and all his glory ; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks. And he shall pass through Judah ; and he shall overflow and go over, and he shall reach even to the neck ; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Emmanuel!"—(Isaiah, vii. 7, 8). In another passage from the same prophet, the "Assyrian" is described as the main instrument in the execution of the great judgment upon the Church. "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge. . . . Wherefore it shall come to pass that, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks"—(Isaiah, x. 5-12). And when, at the close of the bondage, Israel is seen returning, it is along the "high-way" from Assyria. In these predictions, Assyria is put prominently forward as the great oppressor ; her land is made the representative of all the lands in which the Church was to be scattered, and her king the re-

representative of all the kings under whose yoke she was to pass during her term of bondage. The burden of Amos's prophecy is the captivity of Israel, in contradistinction to that of Judah ; yet is that captivity described in terms which lead one to infer that the Holy Spirit regarded it as the commencement of the great era of darkness and affliction. "Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwells therein ? And it shall rise up wholly as a flood ; and it shall be cast out and drowned as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day"—(Amos, viii. 8, 9). And in the last chapter of his prophecy, the sifting of the house of Israel among all nations stands connected with the raising "up the tabernacle of David that is fallen" in the latter day. These events are seen as the two *termini* of one great epoch.

Most manifest is it that these prophecies assign no second rank among the events of the period to the fall of the kingdom of Israel and the captivity of the ten tribes. They speak of it as a turning-point in the providence of God. Therefore, when Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art this head of gold," we have no hesitation in saying that these words indicate, not Nebuchadnezzar personally, but the great Assyro-Chaldean power, of which he was the existing representative ; and when Shalmaneser, a previous head of that kingdom, descended upon the land of Israel, and carried captive the ten tribes, he opened the era of the great

bondage. Shalmaneser's first invasion of the land of Israel took place in 728 B.C. He made Hoshea, king of Israel, tributary to him ; he brought to an end the independence of the Israelitish kingdom, and in a few years after, he consummated the captivity of the ten tribes ; and therefore in the year 728 B.C. are we disposed to place the commencement of the "Seven Times" of the world-power.

But Judah maintained its independence, though menaced by the great northern power. The theocracy set up at Jerusalem still stood ; and so long as it did so the Church could scarce be regarded as *fully* brought under subjection. But when Nebuchadnezzar invaded the land, burned the temple, and carried the Jews to Babylon, the captivity, beyond all question, was consummated. This happened in the year 606 B.C. We cannot date the commencement of the bondage later than 606 B.C. Nor can we well date it earlier than 728 B.C., the era of Shalmaneser. In truth, we regard its commencement as initiated in the captivity of the ten tribes, and consummated in the captivity of the two tribes. The period between, a space of some hundred and twenty years, we view generally as the epoch of commencement. During all this time was the Church passing into her captivity ; and, when the close of that captivity shall be reached, it is probable that we shall find it terminating in an epoch of similar breadth, and of analogous character. When its term, reckoning from the era of Shalmaneser, shall have run out, the knell of the world-power will be

sounded, the ponderous gates of its vast prison will be thrown open, and the ransomed host of the Lord will march forth with shoutings. Rank will follow rank, till the Church has been re-constituted in every land, and this glorious “coming up” will correspond, stage by stage, with the “going down.” And thus it may come to pass that, as the initiative of the deliverance will correspond with the initiative of the captivity under Shalmaneser, so the consummation of the deliverance will correspond with the consummation of the captivity under Nebuchadnezzar.

Here, then, we behold the commencement of the bondage. God set up great monuments to signalize the era, and to mark it off, as it were, from all the other epochs of time. We should have expected as much. The era was to last for some thousands of years : it was to be the gloomiest of all the ages of time,—it was to constitute the mystery of Divine Providence. It was to be the period of Satan’s reign as embodied in the Gentiles’ supremacy ; and during all this while the Church was to be a stranger in a world of which, notwithstanding her desolate estate, she was the rightful heir. How those felt who then lived, and who saw the gathering of this dismal night, and marked its shadows as day by day they grew deeper and darker, we do not know. If any measure of spiritual discernment were left them, they could not but be filled with foreboding and alarm. Even we, far removed as we are in time from it, cannot recal the portents of that gloomy era without a sensation of terror and melancholy. Let

us survey these signs, and see how unmistakeably they certified to the Church that her morning-day of freedom was at an end, and that the night was come when she who had been "great among the nations, and princess among the provinces," was to sew "sackcloth" upon her "skin," and defile her "horn in the dust."

The first sign, and the one externally most notable, of the revolution the world was now undergoing, is the pre-eminence given to Nebuchadnezzar. He is constituted the representative man, so to speak. His throne becomes by pre-eminence the one throne of earth; and his kingdom shoots up to a height of power and grandeur overtopping all the then existing kingdoms, and standing out in bold relief as the head of the nations. All other kings are but feudatories of this king, and all other kingdoms are but dependencies of this kingdom. In Nebuchadnezzar not only does the empire of the age culminate, but, as the head of the image, he is put before us as the representative or embodiment of those potent monarchies that were to spring, in a sense, from his loins. In their reign he was to prolong his reign. Accordingly, a divine gift of rule is made to him. The nations are put in subjection to him; nature itself is commanded to obey him; and with dominion, riches, and victory is he sustained. Nay, more, the Divine power is, in a sense, placed at his service. It becomes pledged to chastise those who should refuse submission to his authority, or who should rebel against his yoke.

This extraordinary deed of gift is made in terms

the most formal, and in a manner the most public. Jeremiah is commanded to call an assembly of the nations, as it were, and to proclaim in their hearing the installation of Nebuchadnezzar as the world's head, and to call upon all those nations, with their kings, to submit to him in that character. The transaction looks far beyond Nebuchadnezzar personally. It is the solemn enthronization of the world-power. And the crown of universal dominion now given it, it was to wear, not during Nebuchadnezzar's lifetime only, not during the existence of the Chaldean empire only, but throughout the entire period of the image. So run the title-deeds now made out in favour of the world-power, as we read them in the twenty-seventh chapter of Jeremiah's prophecy:—"Thus saith the Lord to me ; make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck. And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah ; and command them to say unto their masters, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ; thus shall ye say unto your masters ; I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant ; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come : and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand."

To our mind these words are in marked antithesis to the gift of dominion over all creatures, made to the Messiah as the Son of Man, in the eighth Psalm,— " For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands ; thou hast put all things under his feet : all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field ; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." This dominion is now shifted to the head of Nebuchadnezzar. True, the deed of gift to the Son of Man is not revoked, but it is put in abeyance ; and Nebuchadnezzar comes in his room, as possessor of supreme dominion on earth, " till the very time of his land come." Let us mark how like are the words in which Daniel announces Nebuchadnezzar's investiture with absolute dominion as the world's head, to the words which describe Christ's absolute dominion as the Church's head. " Thou, O king," said Daniel, " art a king of kings ; for

the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all"—(Dan. ii. 37, 38). Thus the world-power and the Son of Man are antithetically placed. The world and all on it was to be put under both in succession. The reign of the world-power was to come first, and that of the Son of Man was to follow. The world-power was now reigning.

The next sign that the doleful years of the Church had commenced was the complete cessation of the Jewish theocracy as an independent power. In alliance with the kingdom of Israel, and the throne of David and Solomon, the theocracy was the head of the world. Under it the Jews enjoyed a measure of independence, of liberty, and glory, which was unknown to the other nations of the earth. The surrounding kingdoms were either the allies or the tributaries of the theocracy during the era of its pre-eminence and splendour in Solomon. But now this state of things was at an end. The throne of David was in the dust ; the world's light had been eclipsed ; and an unbroken gloom covered the earth. God had expressly stipulated with the Jews that, so long as they fulfilled the great end for which they had been separated from the rest of the nations, they should be the "head," and the other kingdoms the "tail." That end they no longer fulfilled ; they had become corrupt and idolatrous, like the heathen around them ; the position they had hitherto occupied

was no longer theirs ; they had lost the birthright ; and the world-power had come in their room for its appointed time. Reft from her native territory, where, on the hill of Zion, the Church had sat, the proudest principality of earth,—God-governed and God-defended,—the admiration of surrounding nations,—she had passed northwards in fetters, and was lost to public view behind the walls of her great prison-house.

It is further noticeable, that the decline of the theocracy and the rise of the world-power went on by equal stages. Not less noticeable is it, that the period that elapsed betwixt the days of Solomon and the reign of Nebuchadnezzar was the age that witnessed this great revolution. The decline of the theocracy dates from the death of Solomon. From the same era dates the beginnings of the Gentile power. The "four kingdoms" begin to emerge at the close of Solomon's reign ; and before the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, they had all taken their place as distinct political existences. It was in this age that the Assyrian and Babylonian kingdom flourished ; it was in this age that the Medo-Persian power developed ; it was in this age that Athens and Sparta rose to eminence, and that Rome laid the foundations of her city and empire. This age, too, was the glorious time of the Phœnician cities, whose colonies, in union with the Greeks, spread civilization from the Palus Mœotis to the Pillars of Hercules.* At the same instant that the theocracy ceased

* See Rawlinson's Bampton Lectures, p. 89.

in Judea, the Gentile power received its completed development in the person of Nebuchadnezzar.

The position the Church then lost she has not fully recovered to this very day. The Jews soon returned to their own land ; but not to dwell there "after their former estate." They were no longer a powerful kingdom ; they were no longer an independent theocracy : on the contrary, they were the tributaries of the dominant powers, without whose tolerating edicts they could not rebuild the walls of their city, nor restore the worship of their temple. To the Medo-Persian power succeed the Greek ; to the Greek, the Roman. By all three were the Jews held in subjection, though that subjection was not at all times equally rigorous. In due time the Christian Church took the place of the Jewish Church ; but along with the place she inherited the bondage of her predecessor. There shone, indeed, upon her, at the era of Constantine's conversion, a brief gleam of enfranchisement and independence ; but that gleam heralded the darkest night of captivity she has ever passed through. To this hour she has never recovered that position in the world she held under the theocracy. She has never been recognised as a distinct spiritual kingdom in the earth. Free and uncontrolled scope has never been given her by the powers of the world for the exercise of that inherent Divine jurisdiction which she possesses under Christ her Head.

Another startling portent of the times strikes us. The Divine communications are not now made to the

Church, but to the world-power. This remarkable revelation of the future which we are now considering is given—to whom?—to a heathen monarch. There were great prophets then living ; but neither to Jeremiah, nor to Ezekiel, nor to Daniel, was this revelation vouchsafed. Nay, the scene of the revelation is changed, as well as its personal channel. It is no longer Judea, to whose favoured soil all former communications had been restricted ; it is a heathen land,—it is the capital of heathendom,—that now becomes the scene of revelation. This, to our mind, indicates very emphatically that a new era had commenced. The world-power had become the centre around which God's providential dealings with the human family were for a time to revolve. God had constituted Nebuchadnezzar the world's head ; and He recognised him in this character by making him the channel of his revelation. What a chastisement to the Jews ! " How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven to earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger ! The Lord hath cast off his altar ; He hath abhorred his sanctuary. The crown is fallen from our head : woe unto us, that we have sinned."

But let us mark how God puts honour upon the Church even in her humiliation ; and how, at the same time, He makes the world to feel, even in the hour of its triumph, how unreal is its power. To Nebuchadnezzar, as the world's presiding head, was the vision given ;

but though he saw it, he could not interpret it ; nay, he could not so much as recollect it, till a prophet from the captive Church came to make it known to him. What the king saw was simply the image of the future,—not the future itself : that future was hid till Daniel uplifted the veil. Thus the enthroned world-power was made to feel its dependence upon the dethroned Church. To that Church had it humbly to sue for the key of the future. Thus power was still on the Church's head by reason of her yet undissolved union with Him who was still the world's sovereign, though he had now veiled his glory as such, and was passing along with his people into humiliation. But, as God's covenant stood fast with him, so it stood fast with her. Her exile from sovereignty was only temporary : the symbols of dominion, now in the world's possession, must yet return to her, the rightful owner. Her diadem was not finally forfeited ; it was but temporarily concealed by her robe of sackcloth.

It must also be noted that at the era of which we speak the tone of Prophecy undergoes a marked and sudden change. Its imagery becomes inexpressibly doleful. True, the most ravishing and glowing pictures of peace, purity, and blessedness, which seer ever presented to man's eye, are those of Isaiah and Jeremiah at this period. But the realization of these pictures are all placed in a distant, in a very distant future. They are beheld on the other side of that tempestuous gulf which is seen to divide the prophets' days from the age to come. When these prophets look into

the immediate future, they see nothing but images of calamity and disaster : Zion in the dust, sitting dis-crowned, dishonoured, bending beneath a sorrow like unto no other sorrow ; and, bitterest of all, compelled to hear her enemies' cutting taunt, "Where is now thy God ?" "She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. O, wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night : give thyself no rest ; let not the apple of thine eye cease. Arise, cry out in the night ; in the beginnings of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord. Thy breach is great like the sea ; who can heal thee ?" No possible miseries of only seventy years' duration could have evoked a lamentation so intensely and touchingly melancholy. Ah, no ! The seventy years would soon run out, and back would come the captives with singing, to rebuild the holy and beautiful house in which their fathers had praised God, and to cover their fair land of Judah once more with her ancient vine. And had this been all, we may be sure tones like these, so heavily freighted with woe, the prophetic harp would never have let fall. But a far darker future was before the Church,—a captivity ten times longer, and a bondage ten times more cruel, than any she was to endure in Babylon. This it was that prompted forebodings so doleful, and awakened a grief so inconsolable. "The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day," said the prophet Amos, in the eighth chapter of his prophecy. He continues in the same strain of despondency and terror, " Shall not the land tremble for

this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein ? And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation ; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head ; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day." We scarce can read these predictions but with tears. There is in them an exuberance of woe, which even the prophets who uttered them little understood. They knew not half the heavy import of their own prophecy. But the Spirit who inspired them knew it all ; and we may know it all, gazing as we now do on the terrible retrospect, and seeing the Church passing through seas of blood, walking in the midst of the furnace of fire, her tears flowing in torrents, and her groans ascending without intermission to an ear that seemed strangely deaf, and an arm that once could deliver, but had now forgotten to save. "O, the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night ? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save ?"

But besides these general lamentations, so plentifully scattered through the prophets, and all laden with so deep a sorrow, we have one special Song of woe. We refer to the "Lamentations" of Jeremiah. These were written at the beginning of the servitude, and

were manifestly intended as a "song for the night"—a song which the Church should sing not only in the night of the "seventy years," but in the night of the "Seven Times." The "Lamentations" express a deeper anguish than any which the calamities of "seventy years" could awaken, or even justify. They depict the far greater humiliations and woes which were then hidden from the Church's eye in the shadows of the great bondage : they provide beforehand a suitable vehicle for her grief,—fit words in which to pour her plaint in the age to come. They are a song she was to sing, not by the rivers of Babylon only, not in the cities of Assyria only : they are a song she was to sing by the rivers of Italy, in the cities of Spain and of Belgium, amid the mountains of the Alps, on the plains of France, in the prisons of England, and on the moors and scaffolds of Scotland. "We have transgressed and have rebelled ; and thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through. Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time ?"

But—how marvellous!—side by side with this vision of coming woe stands a vision of coming glory. All suddenly the harp of prophecy hushes its notes of sorrow, and bursts into a song of rapturous triumph ! Why should this hour have been chosen, with its gathering shadows and its fearful portents, for the most beatific vision the world ever saw of the peace and freedom that awaited it in a far distant age ? Strange it seems to utter a prophecy of universal liberty when

despotism was setting up its throne, and to sing a song of peace, and a song so full and ravishing, at a moment when peace was bidding adieu to the earth ! And yet it is not strange. This is but another sign that the Church was going down into her Egypt. Where is it that sorrow and joy emphatically meet,— that the darkness of the present is pierced and glorified by the light of the future ? Is it not around the deathbed of the Christian ? So was it with the Church. She was going down into her tomb, and she is taught to look beyond that tomb : she has a glimpse of her glorious resurrection. The dark clouds of the present are parted, and the future, with its blessedness and rest, is disclosed to her eye. “As one whom his mother comforteth,” so did God now comfort his Church. “Fear not,” said He, “to go down into Egypt. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also bring thee up again.” She eminently needed to be assured that she should not perish in the grave into which she was descending, and God spake words of peace to her. He assured her that while she should be resting there, hiding in the chambers of the earth, he would be working in the world, and preparing a glorious exodus for her at the appointed time. “For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory : and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the

Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken ; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate : but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah : for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married"—(Isaiah, lxii. 1-4).

Let us mark the Church as she stands on the skirts of the great darkness. When the kingdoms of this world set, they set to rise no more : their day of glory is succeeded only by the long, long night of utter annihilation. But when the Church sets, she sets to rise again, and to rise in a glory that will be all the brighter from the profound obscurcation that had preceded it. When the world-power was rising, it was shown its certain and inevitable destruction by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. With the Church it is the reverse. When entering upon her humiliation, she is shown the dignity to which she shall infallibly rise. If she must die, it is, she knows, that she may live. She is "sown in corruption ;" she will be "raised in incorruption"—purified from the idolatry that had tainted and defiled her. She is "sown in dishonour ;" she will be "raised in glory"—be the light of the world on which she is about to be eclipsed. She is "sown in weakness ;" she will be "raised in power." Like one of her own earliest types, she will come from prison to a throne, and take into her hand the sceptre of an obedient earth. Ah ! how different the hour of her rising, from that of her going down into the grave !

When she passed into her humiliation, there were none to bewail her calamities, none to weep her fall. "The adversaries saw her, and did mock at her Sabbaths." But she that went down into the tomb with every mark of indignity and desertion, shall return from it amidst the most magnificent tokens of acceptance and favour. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace ; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Kings shall rise from their thrones to greet her, and nations shall hail her return with shoutings, recognising in her their great deliverer. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see : all they gather themselves together ; they come to thee : thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah ; all they from Sheba shall come : they shall bring gold and incense ; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee : they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows ? Surely the isles shall wait

for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee." . . .

"Thy sun shall no more go down ; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself : for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended"—(Isaiah, lx. 3-9, and 20).

CHAPTER X.

LENGTH OF THE "SEVEN TIMES."

THERE remains yet another important element in the epoch of bondage to be determined,—its length, to wit. We have already fixed its probable commencement; but the knowledge of its length is equally essential to the right adjustment of the era. Only when both are known can we regard ourselves as in possession of sufficient data for the solution of the question we are discussing. How long, we ask, was the epoch of bondage to last?

We answer, it was to last Seven Times. By seven times are meant seven prophetic years. In order to be satisfied that this is the actual duration of the era of the dominancy of the world-power, and the depression of the Church, let us attend to the following considerations.

Seven is a complete number. The week consists of seven days; and out of this fundamental division do all the cycles and epochs of time emerge. Being a complete number, we should naturally expect that seven times would be the period given to the world-power,—that Satan might have ample time to try what his utmost could effect in the way of establishing and perpe-

tuating his kingdom of evil. If during that long cycle, with all the powers of the world to aid him, with the very beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven given into his hand, he nevertheless should be unable to make his kingdom eternal, and to annihilate the Church, how manifest would it be that he had been defeated, and that Christ had triumphed ! But if the world-power was to dominate for "seven times," the Church was to endure captivity for "seven times." And may there not be an allusion to the predetermined length of her sufferings, in those numerous passages which speak of her being purified "seven times?" "He shall deliver thee in six troubles ; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." Emphatically the "bondage" was the great furnace through which the Church was to pass, and in which she was to be purified. The first captivity effected her purification from ancient idolatry ; but she fell again under its power, and the long captivity was the destined furnace in which was to be effected her purification from papal idolatry.

Again, in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Daniel, the royal tree seen by him is undoubtedly the symbol of the quartate monarchy to arise. That tree is described as affording shelter for all the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven, and meat for all flesh. There is the world-power invested, according to the forementioned deed of gift, with power over all creatures. The fate of the world-power is so far described under the symbol of the tree ; but suddenly the image is changed : Nebuchadnezzar is sub-

stituted in room of the tree, agreeably to Daniel's words, "Thou art this head of gold ;" and the history of the four monarchies is continued under Nebuchadnezzar as their representative. This was in accordance with the usage of the period. The prophets were often constituted representative men, and were commissioned to give a typical symbolization of the calamities awaiting their nation. Ezekiel in this way exhibited the siege and capture of Jerusalem ; and Nebuchadnezzar, after the same fashion, exhibits the history and fate of the four monarchies. Let us mark, then, what befalls Nebuchadnezzar in his character of representative man. "Behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven ; he cried aloud, and said thus . . . Let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth : let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him ; and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones : to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

. . . This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king : that they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men"—(Dan. iv. 13-25).

Viewing, then, the four monarchies in their representative man, we are distinctly told that for "seven times" the whole course and current of their government would be in opposition to God. A strange and woeful perversion were they to undergo ; a terrible eclipse was to pass upon their reason ; the instincts and maxims of their policy were to become bestial ; and the earth, under their rule, lacerated, bleeding, and full of violence, was to be liker a world abandoned to the fury of wild beasts, than a world under the government of man made originally in the image of God ; and not till the "seven times" had run out were they to submit themselves to the principles of reason, as revealed in the Word and embodied in the government of God. Then they should know that the heavens do rule.

But, again, we are able to show that the epoch of the bondage cannot be so short as *six times*, nor longer than *seven times*. In the eighth chapter of Daniel we have a vision of the world-power starting with the second monarchy,—in fact, as we shall prove afterwards, a vision of the same monarchies as that exhibited in the seventh chapter, only wanting the first or Babylonian. The period during which the oppression to be exercised on the Church by these three monarchies should continue is also given. But that period runs considerably over *six times*, and falls short of *seven times*. But the whole must be greater than a part. That oppression, therefore, which extends throughout all the four kingdoms must be longer than that which extends only throughout the last three kingdoms. But the oppression of

the last three exceeds *six times*; the oppression of the four must therefore exceed *six times*. And it cannot be more than seven times; for when we add the short-lived Babylonian empire to the empires that succeeded it, whose term of domination is known from the eighth chapter of Daniel, we find that the whole term of the four kingdoms does not run out beyond "seven times;" in truth, is precisely "seven times." This, then, is the length of the epoch given, as it were, to Satan. For "seven times" was Christ's glory, as Head of the Church, to be veiled; for "seven times" was the Church to be in deepest humiliation; and for "seven times" was the idolatrous principle to be in the ascendant. At its expiry only would society be reconstructed on sound principles.

This era is spoken of in Scripture as the "times of the Gentiles," *i. e.* of the domination of the Gentile idolatry, and, we should also say, of Gentile art and arms. The first half of that era, in especial, witnessed a splendid outburst of the Gentile mind. It saw it reach a pitch of intellectual culture and of social development which the pagan nations had never attained before, and which there is not the least likelihood of their ever attaining again. Then it was that Greek genius effloresced, and that those marvels of statuary, of poetry, and of eloquence, were produced, which, after the lapse of two thousand years, are still admired and studied as models. Then, too, it was that Rome performed her great feats of arms, and displayed her wonderful capacity for organization and government. But

these became so many buttresses of Satan's empire ; for alongside of this wonderful manifestation of the pagan genius flowed on the captivity of the Church. "Jerusalem," said our Lord, in that prophecy which looks much beyond the literal captivity, " shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"—(Luke, xxi. 24). And similar is the Apostle's statement,— "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans, xi. 25).

And how affecting the state of the world during that epoch ! Let us first contemplate it in its representative man. Nebuchadnezzar, the "head of gold," no longer gives audience in his palace ; he no longer sits at his council-table in the midst of his nobles, weighing gravely questions of state, or revolving those mighty projects which had raised to greatness his name and empire. The fire of a maniac flashes in his eye, and the yellings of a maniac resound frightfully through his palace-halls. The mighty monarch of Babylon is driven forth ; he roams the fields with appetite as gross and instincts as bestial as the oxen with which he now herds. He couches nightly on the cold earth, beneath the open heaven, which wets him with its dews. His hairs have grown to be like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. What a change ! "How art thou fallen from heaven !"

This individual picture is sufficiently sad ; but when we reflect that it is the picture, not of a man, nor of an age, but of the world's governing power for thou-

sands of years, it becomes unspeakably and overwhelmingly sad. In this discrowned head and blighted form, chased from men, and herding with brutes, we behold the symbolization of that madness that was to possess the four monarchies during the whole period of their ascendancy. Government is an ordinance of God, but during this dismal era it was to be bereft of its Maker's image : the man's heart was to be plucked out of it, and the heart of the beast was to be given to it ; and the kingdoms of the world, instead of ruling on the principles of justice and clemency, were to display the passions of the wild beast. A political and moral madness fell on these four monarchies as really as on Nebuchadnezzar. They forgot that the heavens do rule. They said that the earth was their own, to break down, destroy, and lay waste at their pleasure. Their palaces were but dens of wild beasts ; their governments were conspiracies against the rights of men and the prerogatives of God ; and their armies the talons with which they tore the flesh and spilt the blood of man.

Let it be observed, too, that it was the "head" of these kingdoms that was smitten. The seat of lunacy is the brain. It may have its beginning in the passions of the heart, but the issue is an obscuration or eclipse of reason. So with the madness of the four monarchies. This madness had its seat in the world's head,—in its ruling governments. The foul passions bred in the beast's heart within them disordered and inflamed their understanding. Like the lunatic who imagines himself some great one,—who, rising to the highest pitch

of lunacy, imagines that he is God,—these kingdoms imagined that they were in the room of God ; nay, their rulers claimed to be God. This was the form their madness assumed. The heads of these empires challenged divine honours after death ; and the Roman emperors claimed, in some cases, divine honours even during their lifetime. This lunacy reached its acme,—expanded into full-blown blasphemy,—in the heads of the last form of the Roman empire. The pontiffs, in particular, claimed to be God on earth. They exalted themselves above all that is called God ; "so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

We behold, then, the world-power placed upon a throne, the Church put in subjection to it, and the nations of the earth bidden to serve it, for its allotted period of "seven times." Let us mark the gradation. For seventy literal years must the Church wait for her deliverance from Babylon. For seventy weeks of years must she wait for the coming of Messiah the Prince. For seven years of years must she wait for her grand final exodus. Thus, one epoch of captivity rises behind another, each longer and gloomier than that which had gone before it. When the seventy years expired, the gates of Babylon were opened, and the Jews returned to their own land, but they returned with fetters upon their arms. These fetters the Church wore for many a long century afterwards. To the world-power it was precisely the reverse ;—one era of dominion and glory opened after another. The Chal-

dean dynasty wielded supremacy over the Church and the world ; and when it fell, it handed over its power to the Medo-Persian. The Medo-Persian bequeathed it to the Grecian ; the Grecian transferred it to the Roman ; and under the Roman the tyranny of the world-power rose to its last and highest pitch, and the Church descended correspondingly into her lowest depth of suffering. Thus dynasty followed dynasty to the tomb ; but the idolatrous principle—the Church's real oppressor—lived on, adding crime to crime, and, in its blasphemy and cruelty, rising from one degree of madness to another, while as yet the "Seven Times" had not completed their cycle.

But the question remains, What is the actual length of the "Seven Times." The seven times, as we have said, are seven prophetic years. How do we compute prophetic time ? We cannot go into detail : we must take the more elementary principles of prophetic exposition for granted. We compute prophetic time by reckoning a literal year for each prophetic day. Is a certain event foretold to continue so many days ?—it will continue an equal number of years. Of this principle the prophecy of the seventy weeks affords a beautiful and convincing illustration. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city Jerusalem, to finish the transgression"—(Dan. ix. 24). It is here foretold that an epoch of "seventy weeks" should pass over the people of the Jews and the city of Jerusalem, and then they should "finish" or fill up their national transgression, and be cast off by God.

From what point do we count these "seventy weeks?" This appears in the following verse :—"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"—(Dan. ix. 25)—*i. e.* sixty-nine weeks betwixt the decree to restore and build Jerusalem, and Messiah the Prince. Can these sixty-nine weeks be understood literally? No; it is impossible; for then the prophecy must have failed. A far longer period intervened betwixt the edict in question and the public appearance of Messiah the Prince. But if we interpret them as weeks of years, we shall find that the prophecy was most exactly fulfilled. In sixty-nine weeks are four hundred and eighty-three days; and betwixt the decree of Artaxerxes, empowering Ezra to return and rebuild the city, issued in 457 B.C., and the commencement of our Saviour's ministry in 26 A.D., are precisely four hundred and eighty-three years. During the last or seventieth week, the covenant was to be confirmed with many; and in the middle of that week the Messiah was to "cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease," by the offering of himself. This corresponds to the year 30 A.D., the date of the crucifixion; and the end of the week to 33 A.D., the year of the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. The whole period of "seventy weeks," determined upon the Jews and their city for finishing transgression, comprehends four hundred and ninety days,—that is, years; and between the edict of Artaxerxes, 458 B.C., and the year 33 A.D., when the Jews filled up their

national sin in the death of Stephen, the rejection of the gospel, and the resisting of the Holy Spirit, who had been offered to them, were precisely four hundred and ninety years. Then that foretold by Daniel came to pass. "And after sixty and two weeks is Messiah cut off, and the city and the sanctuary are not his"—(Dan. ix. 25).* They are now rejected by Christ: the Messianic history opened in Abraham; and, which had run down in his seed, now closes with them. The gospel is transferred, with all its privileges and promises, to the Gentiles; and in them the line of prophecy and of sacred history runs on, as being God's true Church. This interpretation of the "seventy weeks" is at once the illustration of our method of computing prophetic time, and the proof that it is the right mode of computation. It is utterly impossible to show any agreement betwixt the "seventy weeks" and the historic facts, unless on the principle of reckoning each *prophetic day as a literal year*.

In order, then, to determine the actual length of the "seven times," we have simply to inquire how many days there are in seven years? In seven years there are two thousand five hundred and twenty days. Consequently, in the "seven times," there are two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Twenty-five cen-

* For this new translation of the passage, which brings out its meaning with so great clearness, I am indebted to my friend Mr Robert Young, the distinguished Hebraist and Orientalist. The rendering will appear, of course, in his "New Translation of the Holy Bible," now publishing.

turies and twenty years,—such is the length of the epoch. During that long period was the world-power to reign, and the Church to continue in bondage.

When does this epoch run out? We have placed its commencement at the opening of the era of dependence and captivity to the ten tribes, in the year B.C. 728. If to that year you add the "seven times," or two thousand five hundred and twenty years, you are brought down to A.D. 1792 as the termination of this epoch. The existence of the world-power,—the great idolatrous confederacy which had persecuted and blasphemed,—did not, it is true, cease at that period; but his dominating power ceased, and the judgment sat "to take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the time of the end"—(Dan. vii. 26).

This computation of the "seven times" assumes only three hundred and sixty days in a year. The length of the natural year, as all know, is three hundred and sixty-five days, six hours. It may reasonably be asked, why should the length of a prophetic year be different from that of a natural year? We have reflected on this question with great care, and with a bias in favour of the natural year; but on a consideration of the whole subject, we are shut up to the conclusion, that prophetic time is reckoned in years of only three hundred and sixty days. Prophetic periods are founded upon the natural division of time into sevens; it runs on by weeks and months, so many weeks constituting a month, and so many months constituting a year; the given sum of months in a year containing only three hundred

and sixty days. This principle is clearly implied in every one of the numerous statements of prophetic time in the *Revelation*. It seems to have escaped the notice of expositors, although it is sufficiently significant, that prophetic time is never stated in years, but always in days, or in months, or in times and seasons. The seventy literal years of the first captivity, and the prophecy of the Euphratean angels, and of the Millennium, are the only exceptions. All prophecies regarding the great oppression are given in *times*, to teach us, perhaps, that the prophetic "time" does not exactly correspond in length with the natural year. And we are compelled to conclude that it does not; for we are given to understand, especially from the eleventh chapter of the *Revelation*, that in a "time" there are just so many months, and in a month so many days; and the sum of these days gives just three hundred and sixty days to the prophetic "time or season;" and thus very explicitly telling us that a "time," in prophetic language, denotes three hundred and sixty days, and no more. But, more conclusive still, in the twelfth chapter of *Revelation*, we have the "three times and a half" of Daniel and of John computed in days; and the sum of the days is twelve hundred and sixty, which, divided by three and a half, gives three hundred and sixty days to a "time." In verse sixth of that chapter we are told that the woman fled into the wilderness, "where she hath a place prepared of God, where they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days." And in the fourteenth verse we

are informed that the woman is nourished in this wilderness "for a time, times, and half a time,"—making it undoubted that in the three times and a half are just twelve hundred and sixty days. But three times and a half are just the half of "seven times;" and if in the half of the "seven times" there are twelve hundred and sixty days and no more, there must in the whole of the "seven times" be just twice that number of days, or two thousand five hundred and twenty, which is the length of the bondage, as we have already computed it.

Stress is laid by most expositors upon the fact that the Jewish and Persian year, and generally the year of all ancient nations, consisted of three hundred and sixty days, intercalary periods being thrown in to adjust the reckoning.* But the bondage is foretold, not in "years," but in "times;" and what we have to do with is the length of the "time" or "season;" and that is noways doubtful, Scripture dividing it into twelve months of thirty days each. The difference upon the whole period of the "seven times," calculated in "times," and calculated in natural years, is about thirty-five years; that is, the "seven times" would, on the latter mode of calculation, run out to two thousand five hundred and fifty-five years. But the period, we must bear in mind, is foretold in "times;" and nothing is plainer from the prophetic Scriptures themselves, than

* See "The Times of Daniel," by George Duke of Manchester, p. 114; and "A Dissertation on the Apocalypse," by William Cunningham, Esq., p. 115.

the fact that "a time" contains only three hundred and sixty days ; although it must also be borne in mind that each of these days represents a solar year. For the elect's sake the days are shortened.

The "seven times" ran out, we have said, in 1792. The question that forces itself upon the mind here is, "Is this an appropriate ending of the 'seven times ?' Do we find the world undergoing at this era such a change as we should expect when the judgment sits to consume and take away the dominion of the world-power ?" We unhesitatingly answer, We do. When at last the long night wore away, and the morning broke, it was seen to break amid the very terrors which prophecy had foretold. The trumpet was heard to sound, and the echoes of its peal came back from the very extremities of the papal world. The earthquake of revolution,—a revolution unequalled in severity since the beginning of time,—shook the Roman earth. The abyss of past history suddenly opened ; forgotten crimes started forth like phantoms ; and the nations, rising, as it were, from their graves, opened their astonished eyes upon the great white throne. A dark curtain hid the Great Judge from their sight ; yet, in the words of a French writer, "It was shaken by the breath of Him who was behind." Then began to be fulfilled the opening intimation of the Apocalypse,—"Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him ; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." While the Church, well-nigh exanimate by reason of her long oppres-

sion, sighed forth her welcome, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

The era of the French Revolution forms an epoch as notable on the one side as that of Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar is on the other. The one, in fact, is the precise counterpart of the other. The Shalmaneser era was the inauguration of the despotic principle. Henceforward, in alliance with idolatry, it reigned supreme, and maintained from age to age a war of extermination against the theocratic principle, in union with civil liberty. The era of the French Revolution, on the other hand, sounded the death-knell of the despotic principle, and began to break the organization of the world-power in pieces for the deliverance of the Church. The first era established arbitrary government in the State ; it saw accomplished the destruction of every vestige of popular right and privilege which had lingered till then on the earth ; it made idolatry the universal creed ; and, proscribing the rights of conscience, would allow no god to be worshipped save the gods of paganism. The latter era inaugurated the antagonistic principles,—those, namely, of representative government in the State, and of toleration in the Church. When the philosopher, the jurist, or the statesman, would compendiously indicate these principles, he styles them the principles of 1789. Public opinion has accepted the fact that with the French Revolution these principles were received by the nations of Western Christendom.

Thus the epoch is marked off by two great revolu-

tions. The period that divides these two revolutions is homogeneous in its character, being arbitrary and idolatrous throughout. In vain we search the history of the world, from the days of Shalmaneser downwards, for any politico-religious revolution at all to be compared, either in the depth of its principles, or in the vast issues growing out of it, to the Revolution of 1792. Changes manifold we find passing upon the world, it is true, during that time. We see thrones falling ; empire passing from one nation to another ; and the governing races of to-day the tributaries of to-morrow. We see revolutions in art, in literature, in philosophy. We see nations perishing, and new tribes appearing upon the stage. But in the midst of all these changes, one thing abides stable : the tyranno-paganistic principle steadily keeps its ground, and is the one dominant power on earth.

Let us mark, further, how sharply, vividly, and prominently the beginning and the close of this epoch is contrasted in history. At its beginning, the covenant of "dominion" is publicly made with the world-power ; at its close, that covenant is as publicly broken. At the one era, Nebuchadnezzar is seen flourishing in his palace,—the nations of the earth, the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the field, given into his hand. At the other era, the secular head of the fourth monarchy,—the king of France,—is seen standing on a scaffold ; his subjects are in revolt around him ; and his great empire, which up till that very hour men had rested upon as the most stable in Europe, and contemplated

as the most lasting, is suddenly dissolved, and falls in ruins. "Absolute monarchy," says Burke, "breathed its last without a struggle." How evident is it that the "judgment," which had sat at the beginning of the epoch to confer dominion upon the world-power, now sat to take away that dominion ! "The day on which the States-General of France assembled," says Sir James Mackintosh, "is a day that will possibly be accounted by posterity one of the most memorable days in the history of the human race."* We must retire farther still from that day before we can see how memorable it is, or before we can take its true measure. It closed an era, and placed a great gulf betwixt it and the era which it opened. Across that gulf the world can never return, and be what it was previous to 1789. Then the image was smitten ; its death-knell was tolled by the Revolution ; and there is no art or power in man to breathe life into it, and set it up in its former estate of dominion and glory. The place that knew it once can know it no more for ever.

* *Vindiciae Gallicæ*, p. 38.

CHAPTER XI.

HARMONY OF PROPHETIC CYCLES.

ON what principle are these periods arranged ? Are their lengths the result of an arbitrary decree ? or do they expand in a regulated series, the one developing from the other, according to a certain law of progression ? Are they independent the one of the other ? or do they bear a hidden relation, so that the first and lowest become the precursors and types of the last and highest, and find in them their completed development ? Are these various epochs seen to embody, when closely examined, a grand inner harmony ? This is a question of great interest, but it is one whose difficulty is quite equal to its interest.

The principle that regulates the length of these periods we have already so far enunciated. The number seven serves as a basis for them all. The primeval appointment of the Sabbath is the scale, as it were, according to which all the other divisions of time which God has ordained have been laid down. This we can especially trace in the great festivals of the Jews. All the divisions of their sacred time proceeded by sevens. Seven revolutions of the day brought round the Sab-

bath. Seven revolutions of the year brought round the Sabbath year. Seven revolutions of the Sabbath year brought round the great era of Jubilee. Let it be marked that the root of each of these is "seven times." Seven *times* gave a Sabbath ; the *time* here being a day. Seven *times* gave a Sabbath year ; the *time* here being a year. And seven *times* gave a Jubilee ; the *time* here being a Sabbath year.

Let us mark, farther, the change of character which passed upon these several periods, so soon as they had fulfilled themselves, and ushered in each the sacred era to which it looked forward. During their currency all of them were so far eras of bondage. Servile work might be done in them ; debts might be contracted ; liberty might be forfeited ; the Israelite might pledge his lands or his person during them ; but each of these eras ended in a period of rest and release.

Such emphatically was the Sabbath : it was a day of holy rest ; no servile work was to be done upon it. For that day the distinction of master and servant was unknown, so far as regarded the obligation to labour. The whole nation—the lowest individual equally with the highest—came that day into the enjoyment of a liberty the fullest, as it is the highest, man can enjoy on earth. The nation on that day owned but one master,—their Sovereign Jehovah.

Similar immunities were enjoyed on the Sabbath year. That, too, was a period of rest and liberty, and a rest and liberty under the security of a Divine character. Let us mark how complete and full was that rest,

not only to every Israelite, of whatever degree, but even to the "stranger," to the "cattle," and to the "beast" in the land. "And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, and for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat"—(Leviticus, xxv. 1-7). This is an institution that stands alone, in point of beneficence, among human arrangements. How completely does it show that the rule of the Great King is a rule of liberty!

All these eras culminated in a great era of rest and liberty. That era bears a name melodious and sweet, like the silver trumpet whose peal ushered it in,—the Jubilee. Then the great trumpet was blown, and on the instant every fetter gave way; every debt, bond, and obligation, of whatever kind, was cancelled; every

forfeited estate returned to its original owner ; and throughout the whole land of Israel there was a universal restitution of all things, as at the beginning of the era. We find the enactment concerning this high festival of freedom in Leviticus. “ And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years ; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month ; in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof : it shall be a jubilee unto you ; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you ; ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee ; it shall be holy unto you : ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession”—(Leviticus, xxv. 8-13).

Now, let us mark the gradation. Seven days made a sabbath ; seven sabbaths of years made a sabbatic year ; and seven sabbatic years ushered in the jubilee. These periods of sacred rest developed progressively, and at last culminated in a grand jubilean period of emancipation and restitution.

But the question forces itself upon the mind, Did the

jubilee not look beyond itself ? Had it no typical character ? Does it not stand here the glorious shadow of a far mightier and grander era of emancipation and restitution ? If, as the Apostle informs us in the tenth chapter of Corinthians, so many things in the history of Israel were types of blessings to be enjoyed under the gospel,—if this character belonged to the manna and the rock in the wilderness, so that they held forth in shadow spiritual privileges to be enjoyed in the age to come,—how much more those great festivals which God appointed, which he so signally stamped with his own beneficence, and whose stated return and solemn observance he so carefully regulated and enjoined ? Yes : the silver trumpet which every fiftieth year sounded so glad a peal throughout the land of Israel, foretold a yet more blessed jubilee ; and the believing Israelite, in the notes of the one, heard the first echoes of that trumpet which will sound the fall of idolatry over all the earth, and the opening of the prison to the captives of every land.

These festivals were types. They were as really types as the sacrifices. They were types specially appointed. They stood looking towards the future, and their faces caught a glory from that future towards which they looked. A day of liberty, so far off that no pagan poet had caught a glimpse of it, projected its first rays upon them. They were not that Liberty ; but they saw its coming, and foretold it. They were prophets of the Millennium. Let us again glance back upon them, and see what true prophets they were.

As there were three periods of Rest among the Jews,—the Sabbath, the Sabbathic year, and the Jubilee,—so three periods of Rest, or, more properly, three servile periods ending in rest, stand predicted to pass over the Church,—the first the captivity of seventy years, the second the seventy weeks or four hundred and ninety years, and the third the *seven times*, or two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Each of these, be it also observed, like its Jewish type, is a servile period while it is running on, but, having completed its cycle, it passes instantly into a period of release. Be it remarked further, that it is only the last period in each series that brings a full release. The Sabbath enfranchised the Israelite for only a day. With the close of the Sabbath and the return of the week-day his burdens returned. The Sabbathic year enfranchised the Israelite only while it lasted ; his debts, obligations, and toils returned with the following year. But the Jubilee brought a final release. All existing bonds and burdens it swept away. So, of the three great Releases foretold in Prophecy, the last only is a full and final one. The “seventy years” brought a release from Babylon ; but the Church still remained under the world-power. The “seventy weeks” brought Messiah the Prince, and introduced the gospel ; but the brief respite was followed by a renewal of bondage. But the “seven times” will witness the final breaking of all yokes, and the full restoration of the Church to the independence and supremacy she held while the theocracy existed. Nay, more glorious than ever will the

Church then appear. "For thus saith the Lord, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb."

But farther, both the Sabbath year and the Jubilee contain the root of that greater jubilean era which the "seven times" will usher in. In a Sabbath year were seven literal years; and in seven literal years are three hundred and sixty Sabbaths; and in three hundred and sixty Sabbaths are two thousand five hundred and twenty days. A Sabbath year was thus the "seven times" in miniature. Observe how it is with the Jubilee. This period ran on for forty-nine years in its character of servile, and then came the trumpet of release. In forty-nine years are seven Sabbath years; and in seven Sabbath years are three hundred and sixty Sabbaths multiplied by seven, or two thousand five hundred and twenty Sabbaths. Thus, again, did the Jubilee exhibit in type the great jubilean period. In the Sabbath year were two thousand five hundred and twenty days. In the Jubilee were two thousand five hundred and twenty Sabbaths. And in the great New Testament Jubilee, or "seven times," are two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Days, sabbaths, years, were the three ascending grades by which the Israelite reached the highest festival of his Church. Days, sabbaths, years, are the three ascending grades by which we mount to the august portals of the Millennial Church,—those gates which are not to be shut

at all by day (and there shall be no night there), for now Satan is bound, and oppression is no more.

It is farther observable, that the last number of each series is obtained by multiplying the term or period into itself. Under the Old Testament, a sabbath of sabbaths, or seven sabbatic years, formed a Jubilee. In New Testament times, a jubilee of jubilees will give us the final Jubilee. In fifty jubilees there are within a few years of the appointed number of two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Thus we may say, as seven revolutions of the sabbatic year,—seven being the sabbatic number,—brought round the great sabbatic year or Jubilee, so fifty revolutions of the jubilee, —fifty being the jubilean number,—will bring round the grand Jubilee, the Sabbath of the world. These statements may be accepted as approximations towards the full development of the principle of the prophetic cycles, and the law of their progression. They tend to assure us, moreover, that the number two thousand five hundred and twenty is the number that rules the great bondage ; and that its expiry will put an end alike to the suffering of the Church and to the glory of the world-power.

Whatever difficulty these periods may present, we may be sure that that difficulty noways arises from anything indeterminate or inexact in the periods themselves. God has measured the periods of darkness and light in the natural world ; and it cannot be that he has left uncertain the epochs of darkness and light in the moral universe. This is a matter that appertains to

the righteousness of his government. Nay, it is a matter that appertains to its stability. These periods are parts of a great whole ; and were they to exceed their appointed term, or were they to fall short of it, by even a hair's-breadth, the plan of the Infinite would be thrown into confusion. No ; the cycles of time revolve with the same regularity as the cycles of the sky. The comet retreats into the far distant fields of space, and for ages is buried in the darkness of the firmament ; but it returns without fail from its journey of myriads of myriads of leagues, and takes its place at the appointed moment among the stars of heaven. Is all determinate in nature, and is all indeterminate in providence ? No ; the same God who has ordained an order so admirable among the bodies of the sky, has ordained an order, we may be sure, not less admirable among the events of his government. As move the stars of heaven, so move the acts of providence. God has fixed from all eternity the days the Church shall pass in bondage ; and the whole power of the kingdom of darkness shall not be able to postpone the decree of deliverance by a single instant. "The offence taken at the chronological intimations of Daniel and the Apocalypse," says Auberlen, "will vanish when they are seen from this point of view. . . . Not only nature, but history, is based in numbers. . . . They are, so to say, the skeleton, the scaffolding, of the organic edifice."* "All things visible," says Roos,

* The "Prophecies of Daniel" and the "Revelations of John," by Carl August Auberlen, Prof. Theol., Basil, p. 136.

"are arranged by God wisely, according to times and numbers. He has applied most wisely arithmetic and geometry in the inanimate world. If so, what must his government of *rational* creatures be ? Surely pure righteousness, perfect order. Everything is necessarily measured out according to its essential value and dignity, and the moral character of beings. Behold the divine Mathesis ?"*

* Quoted by Auberlen, p. 136.

CHAPTER XII.

VISION OF CLEANSING, OR SECOND CHRONOLOGICAL
LINE.

WE have considered the epoch delivered over to the world-power. Its beginning and its end,—the morning and the evening of its day,—are strongly and definitely marked. On the one side stands the great image ; on the other rises the great white throne. The era between is a lengthened one : at least it seems long to the Church, which is seen all throughout it a captive and a mourner. But to the world-power it is an era of prosperity and glory. Satan hath said to it, All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, will I give thee, provided you consecrate yourself to my interests, and lend your arms and your laws to the support of idolatry. The world-power hath struck hands with the Tempter. It “hath made a covenant with death and with hell”—is it “at agreement?”—and for “seven times” it reigns in power and great glory. But at last its knell is sounded : earthquake shakes the world, and despotic thrones and idolatrous systems come up for judgment. We see no literal throne in the sky ; we discern the face of no personal judge ; yet

the world-power is made to feel that the tribunal has been erected, and that seated thereon is the Great Judge. His voice is heard from amid the clouds and darkness that veil his throne ; and his arm is seen in the great acts of judgment by which the thrones of the world-power are cast down, and their dominion taken away.

That epoch, we have shown, began with the captivity of the Ten Tribes, and ended at the outbreak of the French Revolution. We now proceed to trace the convergence of all the chronological lines of Prophecy on the era of 1792.

There are three, and only three, great chronological lines in Prophecy. Each has a different starting point, but they all terminate together. The first and longest line is the "Seven Times." We may term it the trunk-line of Prophecy : it runs on for twenty-five centuries and twenty years, and embraces the entire period of the *domination* of idolatry. The second longest line is the two thousand three hundred years of the vision of cleansing. The third line is the "time, times, and the dividing of time," of Daniel ; or the twelve hundred and sixty years of John, embracing the period of the reign of Antichrist. All these lines have, as we have just said, a common termination ; and that termination marks the close of the reign of idolatry. While they are running on, the idolatrous world-power is supreme and dominant ; but when they terminate, his domination is taken away, but not as yet his existence. We shall now show that they all terminate at one and the same

time,—the point of common termination or convergence being the French Revolution.

We turn now to the eighth chapter of Daniel. In that chapter we have the record of a vision which Daniel saw in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar. The vision is substantially the same with that of the Image and of the Four Beasts ; only it begins with the second kingdom, and gives great prominence to the fourth kingdom, presenting it under new aspects and modifications. Daniel's visions are all within the great historic line. They never once turn aside to notice any other confederacy, whether political or ecclesiastical, which lies off the great highway of Prophecy ; they steadfastly point, and progressively tend, towards the grand culmination of the world-power in the Papacy. The scene of the vision,—which we purpose to explain no farther than is necessary for our immediate object, which is that of fixing the time of its beginning and of its end,—is laid on the banks of the Ulai. “ Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold there stood before the river—(that is, on its western bank)—a ram which had two horns.” It is necessary to premise, that now—that is, at the time implied in the vision—the first kingdom, “ the head of gold,” had passed away, and the second had risen. The second is the Medo-Persian monarchy ; and its symbol is the “ ram” which Daniel beheld standing on the western bank of the Ulai.

Let us mark the attitude and action of the “ ram” when first seen by Daniel ; for this is of importance

towards the determination of the time of the opening of the vision. The “ram” is seen standing,—that is, “continuing” or “subsisting” in his power; and he is seen immediately to push—that is, to make war—“westward, and northward, and southward, so that no beasts might stand before him.” The Medo-Persian empire is seen at the opening of the vision prosperous and stable, carrying its arms and its victories in three several directions, and by its conquests gaining yet greater glory and power. So much the opening symbol makes manifest. We read on: the Medo-Persian power passes away; and the third monarchy, the Macedonian or Greek, stands up in its room. “As I was considering, behold an he-goat came from the west, on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground.” What a graphic picture of the rapidity of the conquests of Alexander the Great, the founder of the Macedonian empire! He “smote the ram;” and “there was no power in the ram to stand before him; but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him.” “Therefore the he-goat waxed very great”—(Daniel, viii. 5-8). With unexampled suddenness had the Greek power risen to universal monarchy.

We read on again. The third kingdom passes away in its turn; and the fourth kingdom, the greatest of them all, makes its appearance upon the stage. But mark, the Roman kingdom is seen in this vision, not in its *pagan*, but mainly in its *papal* form. The obvious design of the vision is to draw at full length what had scarce found a place in the vision of the “image” and

of the “four beasts.” Great prominence, accordingly, is given to the “papal horn,” as being the culminating form of the world-power, and emphatically the “wilderness and sackcloth” period of the Church. Let us run summarily over this passage, and mark with what unerring precision and happy brevity every prominent feature in the character of papal Rome is struck off.

The description begins at verse ninth. “And out of one of them (the four notable horns of the Greek power) came forth a little horn.” Small at its beginning, the Roman power, as the prophecy indicates, speedily “waxed exceeding great toward the south (Egypt), and toward the east (Asia Minor), and toward the pleasant land” (Palestine). It was the conquest of Macedonia which enabled the Roman power to take its place as the fourth universal empire in the earth. The newly risen horn “waxed great even to the host of heaven,” the worshippers of the true God ; “and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground.” The Romans signalized their conquests in Judea by a persecution and slaughter of some of the priests ; and how soon and fearfully papal Rome began to persecute, seducing or destroying the professors of the truth, we need not say. The “horn” proceeded to yet greater extremities. “Yea, he magnified himself against the Prince of the Host,”—against Messiah the Prince. Pagan Rome magnified herself against Christ when she crucified him ; and papal Rome magnified herself against Christ when the Pope set himself up in his room, claimed to be his vicar, and became the Antichrist.

Rising to a still higher pitch of blasphemy, the “little horn” took away “the daily sacrifice.” The Romans took away the literal daily sacrifice, and Rome papal took away the “daily” or continual “sacrifice” of Christ when she substituted the *mass* in its stead, and, by her arrogated power of offering sacrifice for the living and the dead, denied the one great propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. The “little horn” consummated its wickedness by casting down “the place of his sanctuary.” This Rome pagan did when she burned the temple ; and this Rome papal did still more when she cast down the organization and government which Christ and his apostles had given to the Christian Church, first by the heresies which she broached, and second, by the persecuting violence with which she assailed all who continued to profess the truth. The passage presents a double portrait in one painting. It compendiously groupes all the characteristic traits of Popery, and with a few touches brings out in prominent relief all the notable acts of its fearfully guilty career. The application of the prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes is, in our view, manifestly out of the question, for it suggests a wider and longer desolation than any which he inflicted. And, moreover, the interpreting angel (Dan. viii. 19-23) places the rise of the “little horn” “when the transgressors are come to the full,”—that is, when the apostacy has culminated ; and his persecution runs on till “the end of the indignation,” that is, till the justification of the sanctuary at “the time of the end.”

We are aware that there are expositors of Prophecy,

Faber and Elliot among the number, who see in the “little horn” of this vision the symbol of Mohammedanism. We have carefully considered the grounds on which they rest their opinion; but, after the best consideration which we are able to give them, we are constrained to regard them as wholly insufficient to sustain that opinion. We can find none of the characteristic features of Mohammedanism in the “little horn,” save the one feature of the idolatrous,—a far too general trait to found an identification upon. Whatever system it be that Prophecy describes, it seizes upon the essential features of that system,—on those features that are peculiar to it, and to no other; and stamps the likeness of the system with an impress so sharp and truthful as to leave no possibility of mistaking it. But where are the essential features of the Mohammedan power in this vision? If it was meant that Mohammedanism should be seen in the “little horn,” then has Prophecy in this instance forgotten its happy art, and failed to paint the very likeness of the system it was predicting. We are further to take into account the following very grave objections,—namely, that the Mohammedan power followed the Macedonian kingdom at an interval of well-nigh eight hundred years; that its rise was at Mecca, which is scarce included in any one of the four divisions of the Macedonian kingdom; that it was an invader from without, rather than a horn rising from within; and that, though Mohammedanism was a terror and a scourge, it was so, not to the professors of the truth, but to the adherents of idolatry. The sanctuary

of the Christian Church had been profaned and desolated before it arose; and in no proper sense can it be said of Mohammedanism that it took away the "daily sacrifice," and cast down the "place of the sanctuary." These were the doings, not of the Mohammedan horn, but of the papal horn.

The only objection of any apparent weight to this view of the matter is, that the "little horn" is said to rise out of one of the four notable horns into which the Macedonian power was parted on the death of Alexander. But this will be felt to have but little weight, when we reflect that, though the Romans came from Latium, they were, by common report, a Greek colony. "If there is any doubt," says the Duke of Manchester, "as to whether the nation was a colony of the Greeks, this evidence would be sufficient to preponderate."* And farther, it was by the conquest of Macedon, the cradle of the Greek kingdom, that the Romans served themselves heirs to the empire of the world, and took their place as the fourth universal kingdom. Let us mark the unity this gives to Daniel's visions. Though communicated to him "at sundry times, and in diverse manners," they form a great whole. In his prophetic prospective is beheld only one system, and that system is seen growing ever stronger in its political organization, and rising ever higher in its blasphemous development, till at last it culminates in a power that magnifies itself against the Prince of the Host, takes away

* "Times of Daniel," p. 399.

the “perpetual sacrifice,” casts down “the place of the sanctuary,” and shows himself as God, sitting in the temple of God.

Daniel had been shown an affecting vision of the sanctuary of Christendom defiled by a tyrannical and blasphemous power ; and he was naturally desirous of knowing how long that defilement would continue. “And a certain saint” asked “the wonderful numberer, “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?” (ver. 13.) The answer is given in ver. 14, “And he said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days [years]; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” or justified,—*i. e.* the sentence ‘delivering it over to desolation on account of transgression shall be lifted off, and the initiative taken in its cleansing. We are here distinctly told that at the expiry of two thousand three hundred years, the sanctuary of Western Christendom, defiled by the errors and desolated by the persecuting violence of the Papacy, should begin to be cleansed. The great question here is, From what point are we to count these two thousand three hundred years? Unquestionably we are to count them from the opening of the vision. The question put is, “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice?” And the answer returned is, The vision shall be “until two thousand and three hundred days” [years]. This turns us back to the beginning of the vision.

The opening symbol of the vision is the ram,—the Medo-Persian power,—firmly established on the west of the Ulai, and beginning to wage war “westward, and northward, and southward.” What period in the history of the Medo-Persian kingdom synchronises with the symbol? Not the rise of that kingdom under Cyrus; for in that case we should have been shown the ram rising. Not its decadence under Xerxes; for in that case we should have been shown the ram retreating, not pushing victoriously, “so that no beasts might stand before him.” We have examined the question very carefully, and we are fully satisfied that there is but one period in the Medo-Persian history that fulfils all the conditions of the symbol, and that is the reign of Darius Hystaspes. By the consent of historians, the Medo-Persian power reached its height under this monarch. Darius Hystaspes rescued the empire from a weak prince of the name of Smerdis, and by his wisdom opened for it a new era of prosperity and glory. He was equally distinguished as a legislator and as a warrior. The internal arrangements of his hundred and twenty-seven provinces he remodelled and perfected: the boundaries of his empire he extended far beyond the limits at which Cyrus and Cambyses had left them. Of Smerdis, the successor of Cambyses, and the immediate predecessor of Darius, we say nothing; for under him the empire had begun to decline; but the vigour of Darius brought new territories to the Persian monarchy, and new lustre to the Persian arms. And, what is much to our point, these

acquisitions of territory were in the precise directions indicated in the prophecy,—to the west, to the north, and to the south.

Of the wars of Darius Hystaspes, Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus have left us a tolerably minute account. They inform us how this monarch, by the help of vast armies and powerful fleets, invaded Greece on the west, Scythia and Thrace on the north, and those parts of India lying towards the south of Persia. These are the precise directions in which the prophet saw the ram pushing,—westward, northward, and southward. The pushing “southward” is the last to be indicated ; and, accordingly, the expedition to India was subsequent to at least the initiative of his great northern and western expeditions. He fitted out a fleet on the Indus, which, descending that river, coasted along westward to the Red Sea, and returned by Egypt. It is reasonable to suppose that the parts of India which Darius conquered were those which his exploring party had surveyed,—indeed, we know they lay along the Indus,—and these lay southward of Persia. This expedition to India was undertaken in B.C. 508.

A document of a remarkable kind, and one coeval with Darius himself, has just the other day been brought to light. This document throws fresh interest and intelligence upon the prophecy we are considering. We refer to the graven rock at Behistun. That rock remained unread for ages, an idle wonder, as it seemed, for little did men dream what record it bore, till the other year that Mr Rawlinson deci-

phered it, and found it to be a history of the wars of Darius, graven by the order of Darius himself. From that record it appears that Darius Hystaspes fought nineteen battles, conquered nine kings, and compelled their nations to submission to his yoke. What a picture of the pushings of the ram westward, northward, southward, and victorious on all sides ; "so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand ; but he did according to his will, and became great." This record Providence has preserved to our day, as if to authenticate his own prophecy, and to lead us with his own finger to the right interpretation of it.*

As if still farther to indicate the connection of Darius Hystaspes with the Vision of Cleansing, the literal temple at Jerusalem was in his reign re-consecrated. It was this king of Persia who granted the Jews permission to resume the building stopped by the opposition of the Samaritans, and in B.C. 516 the temple was finished and solemnly dedicated.

Now, let us come to the conclusion which all these facts enable us to draw. In the foreground of the vision stands conspicuously the ram, pushing victoriously towards the west, and towards the north, and towards the south. History is a faithful reflection of Prophecy,

* The inscription is a trilingual one. The reader may see it in full in Rawlinson's "Herodotus," vol. ii. The more material portions are given by Dr Keith in his "History and Destiny of the World and the Church." There is no mention of India in the Behistun tablet, but it occurs on the platform at Persepolis.

God having taken care that whatever is prominent in the one should be equally prominent in the other. Whether it be the pages of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, or the graven rock at Behistun, silent so long, silent no longer, it is the ram that is seen pushing victoriously at this era, just as the prophet saw him. One year is specially noted by historians as the year when all these great expeditions, which lasted till the very close of this reign, were fairly initiated, and that is the year B.C. 508. If, from the year B.C. 508 we count the two thousand three hundred years of the vision, we are brought down to the year 1792 as the year when the sanctuary should be justified, and the initiative taken in its cleansing. But this, we have already shown, is the year when the "seven times" run out, and the judgment sits.*

Did the sanctuary then begin to be cleansed? In 1792 we find, amid social convulsions and political terrors, a double process of cleansing beginning in western Christendom. A storm gathers suddenly over the area of the fourth kingdom; it bursts in unexampled fury; but mark where its violence falls! It falls on the very dynasties and hierarchies which had persecuted the saints. The despotic thrones and idolatrous altars of the papal world were shaken by the earth-

* For the facts on which the conclusions of this chapter are founded the author has consulted Wilkinson's "Herodotus," vols. ii. and iii.; Diodorus Siculus; Prideaux, vol. i.; Rollin, book vi., chap. 1-8; Tytler's "Elements of Ancient History;" Fraser's "History of Persia," &c. &c.

quake, and shivered by the lightnings of that storm, preparatory to their being swept altogether out of existence. The sentence of "desolation" was lifted off from the Church, and laid upon the world-power. The desolating agent began itself to be made desolate. Contemporaneously with this process of destruction we can trace a process of re-edification. At this era were founded those great evangelistic institutions in Britain and in America which have ever since been carrying the Bible and the gospel to every accessible part of the continent of Europe, and of the world. The same hour that saw the armies of the Revolution go forth to inflict upon the papal nations the ravages of war, saw also the first missionaries go forth to preach the gospel of peace to the nations. The same whirlwinds that swept away the abominations of Christendom, made a way for the light to shine again into that sanctuary which popish error had so long darkened, and popish violence had trampled under foot. Thus, amid the dark clouds of judgment a spiritual temple was seen to rise, beauteous and fair, upon the old foundations. "They shall build the old wastes ; they shall raise up the former desolations ; and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE THREE TIMES AND A HALF, OR THIRD
CHRONOLOGICAL LINE.

IT remains that we trace the third chronological line to its terminating point. Provided we shall find that it converges on the same era on which the "Seven Times" and the "Two Thousand Three Hundred Days" so manifestly converge,—that, in short, we are set down a third time at the foot of the great Throne erected for the judgment of the world-power,—then one very important epoch we may regard as having been ascertained with considerable probability, or rather, we ought to say, certainty. The scheme of Prophecy will begin to gather shape before our eyes. The order of God's eternal plan as regards his Church in time will still more unfold itself. And our object in these discussions is not so much to fix the date of particular epochs, as to reveal their progression and onward march to the high end contemplated from eternity. We humbly aim at following the stately steps of God, to us so unfathomable, in themselves so holy and wise, and which, without pause, without deflection even, with unfaltering purpose, and steady, irresistible advance,

through dispensations shrouded this hour in terror, and the next beaming with unchangeable lovingkindness and truth, have been conducting the Church from the beginning right onwards to her long-predicted goal, "the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven."

The third and shortest line of the three is mentioned for the first time in the seventh chapter of Daniel, the twenty-fifth verse. Oppressed by the vision of the "four great beasts," which seemed to him to portend an era of trouble to the Church, running far into the future, and culminating in an epoch of fearful calamity, he came near unto one of them "that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this." The person so interrogated interpreted to him the meaning of the first three beasts. But Daniel would know "the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful." Especially he would know the interpretation of his "ten horns," and, above all, of "the other that came up after them, before whom three fell." This horn riveted his attention, as unmistakeably and broadly distinguished from the others. Its characteristics gave the worst augury of its doings. It had eyes like a man, a mouth that spake very great things, a look more stout than its fellows, and a relentless malignity that incited it to make war with the saints, till taken in the act, as it were, by the coming of the "Ancient of Days." These symbols indicated most surely to the eye of the prophet, the possession, on the part of the "horn," of a profound policy and

craft, a superhuman pride, a daring blasphemy, and a cruel and bloodthirsty disposition. In short, they stamped the "horn" as eminently the enemy of God, and the persecutor of his saints.* Daniel had full information given him on that part of the vision that appertained to the "horn," though only the briefest explanations of the other parts. Amongst other intimations, Daniel is definitely told the term of the domination of this blasphemous and persecuting power. (Daniel, v. 25), "They (the saints) shall be given into his hand, until a time and times, and the dividing of time."

"A time and times, and the dividing of time," are three times and a half. But let us mark that three times and a half are just the half of seven times. But "Seven Times" are the grand trunk-line of chronological Prophecy. They embrace, as we have said, the whole period of the reign and domination of the Idolatrous Principle, from its ascendancy at the beginning of the Church's captivity, to the sitting of the judgment at the "Time of the End." But we are here given distinctly to understand that, during that half of the "Seven Times" that precedes the sitting of the judgment, the saints are to be given into the hands of the papal horn. If so, it follows undeniably, that as

* "This horn was a kingdom of a different kind from the other kingdoms, having a life or soul peculiar to itself, with eyes and a mouth. By its eyes it was a seer; and by its mouth, speaking great things, it was a prophet as well as a king. And such a seer, a prophet, and a king, is the Church of Rome."—*Sir Isaac Newton on Daniel, chap. vii.*

the Church is to be tyrannized over by the Idolatrous Power throughout the whole of the "Seven Times," she will be oppressed during the first half of the "Seven Times" by idolatry in the form of Paganism, and during the last half by idolatry in the form of Popery. This teaches us to expect some great and palpable change, not upon the essential nature, but upon the outer form, of idolatry, at the middle of the "Seven Times." We say, a change not upon the inner or essential principle. There has never been but one idolatry on the earth ; just as there has never been but one gospel upon the earth. As the gospel of the Old Dispensation was essentially the same gospel with that of the New,—only now the gospel is more fully developed, and is better understood and more clearly seen, in its spiritual character and relations,—so we have never had but one idolatry upon the earth ; for the Popery of modern Europe is the same essential idolatry with the Paganism of Greece and Rome ; only in these latter days it is more fully developed, and has become a subtler, or, if you will, a more spiritual system. But the prophecy bids us expect a change upon its outer form, and points to the middle of the "Seven Times" as the time when that change will take place. Do we find the Idolatrous Power undergoing any very marked change at the period indicated ?

Let us bisect the "Seven Times." Their length in all is two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Their commencing epoch is B.C. 728, and their closing epoch is A.D. 1792, stretching betwixt the captivity of

the Ten Tribes and the French Revolution. Divided, they give two periods of twelve hundred and sixty years each,—a well-known period in the Apocalypse, as that of the reign of Antichrist and the prophesying of the Witnesses in sackcloth. The bisecting year of the “Seven Times” is the year A.D. 532. At that year, or about that year, ought idolatry to undergo the change here indicated ; it ought to drop its pagan garb, and assume its pseudo-Christian or popish form ; and it ought to do so under the tutelage or auspices of the “ten horns,” and especially of that “horn” which was to rise up and assume the presidency of the ten. Let us go back to the year A.D. 532, and interrogate history. When we do so, we behold the very change passing upon the civil kingdoms of Europe, and especially upon its ecclesiastical system, which Prophecy had indicated. By A.D. 532, Paganism has disappeared, and the great kingdom that upheld it has sunk beneath the flood of the Gothic invasion. But what do we behold ? Out of the deluge that overwhelmed the pagan empire, we find the old Europe—the papal empire—emerging, not now as one Roman kingdom, but parted into ten Romano-Germanic kingdoms ; and precisely in the year A.D. 532, or, to be less definite, from A.D. 530 to A.D. 533, we find Justinian, by the publication of his Code and Pandects, imparting to the new kingdoms the laws, the literature, and the religion of Old Rome, and so re-creating, as it were, the fourth beast, with its power parted into ten kingdoms or horns, its main instigator

and ruler being that horn whose "look was more stout than his fellows," and having the saints given into his hand for "a time, times, and the dividing of time." All this happens in the bisecting year of the "Seven Times;" and if from the year A.D. 532 you count the "time, times, and the dividing of time," or the twelve hundred and sixty years, you arrive again at the grand point of convergence, 1792.

Following the line from its manifest historic starting-point, you are placed once more at the foot of the judgment-seat. Down to that very year had Rome persecuted. She was caught, as it were, with the blood unwiped upon her hands. The revocation of the edict of Nantes, with all its horrors, had been enacted but a century before. The exiled Huguenots, dispersed throughout all the protestant countries, were living monuments that Rome was still persecuting the saints. All throughout the century that followed, banishments and martyrdoms were occurring in France. She was engaged in hunting the "flock of the desert" on the mountains of the Cevennes, and hanging their pastors, when the chariot-wheels of the coming Judge broke in thunder upon her ear. Her edicts of proscription and massacre ceased with the Revolution. The God of the Huguenots suddenly summoned France to his bar.

Here, then, is the common meeting-place of the three great lines. The "Seven Times," commencing at the first captivity, terminate in 1792. The two thousand three hundred years of the vision of cleansing, com-

mencing with the pushings of the Medo-Persian ram, terminate in 1792. And the “three times and a half” of the papal horn, commencing at the Justinian era, terminate in 1792. Considering that these several lines are but different phases of the same idolatrous confederacy, we should expect that they would have a common terminating point. When the world-power falls at the close of the “Seven Times,” it must needs be that the horn that rose out of its last head should fall with it ; and when these two blasphemous and persecuting powers fall, what should we expect but that the sanctuary which they had defiled and desolated should begin to be cleansed and rebuilt ? And so Prophecy assures us it shall be ; for it distinctly places all three,—the taking away of dominion from the world-power, the termination of the reign of the papal horn, and the cleansing of the sanctuary,—at the coming of the Ancient of Days. And therewith agrees the fact. The best consideration we are able to give to the various starting points of these three lines leads us to the conclusion that they all run out at this epoch. And what an epoch ! How manifestly judicial ! How fearfully retributive ! It let fall the hoarded vengeance of ages upon the papal kingdoms. Unless history is a lie, then the great white throne was set up, and then the world-power, discrowned, the blood of the saints upon its skirts, was put to the bar.

When the traveller sees all the great lines of traffic and intercourse converging a short distance in advance of him, at the point, says he, where all these highways

appear to meet must stand the capital of the country. He may not see it at the moment ; the mountains, or the woods, or the mists of evening, may hide it from his view ; but there, says he, it must stand ; and he knows he has only to go forward a little farther, and its towers and bulwarks will rise dark against the sky, and its portals will open to bid him welcome. Or when the astronomer beholds, as he does, all the stars of heaven converging on a point indefinitely remote in space, at that point, he says, though so far off that no eye, no telescope, can discern it in the abysses of the firmament, there is, there must be, some body of colossal size, some luminary of transcendent splendour ; for see how, from every quarter of the sky, with steps slow and majestic, the orbs of heaven are marching down upon it. There must be the centre of the material universe. We also so conclude, when we see all the great lines of Prophecy, from their various starting points in the past, converging on this era : this, say we, is no common era ; this must be a grand crisis in the providence of God ; this must be a grand crisis in the history of the world ; some principle of most momentous issue is here receiving its initiative ; and we have only to stand aside, and wait till the work in progress has been developed, and then it may be that we shall find ourselves in presence of that new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

CHAPTER XIV.

LENGTH OF THE JUDGMENT DAY.

THE point of convergence of the three chronological lines is not the “end;” it is only the beginning of the “end.” It closes the “bondage,” and ushers in the terrors and wonders of the exodus. Then the sanctuary is “justified,” the sentence of desolation and overthrow passes over from the Church to the world-power. The “dominion” of that power ceases, though its existence is prolonged for a season, and an era of retribution and vengeance opens upon it; the shaking, namely, foretold by the prophets of the old heavens and the old earth, in order that those new heavens and that new earth which cannot be shaken may be set up. This is the great judgment day, which is to close the dispensation of the “Seven Times;” and the question which here arises is, how long shall that judgment day continue? We think we have data in the prophetic Scriptures for the solution of this question.

It is not reasonable to expect that this powerful system will be overthrown in a day. Idolatry has existed on the earth ever since the beginning. For the past twenty-five centuries it has been dominant in

the world ; it has sat entrenched behind the whole military power and the entire political craft of empire ; philosophy, literature, and art, have striven unceasingly to conceal its falsehood, to veil its grossness, and to rivet its chains. The very length of time it has existed on the earth has become to it a protection, by creating a powerful and venerable prestige in its favour. That a single blow should suffice to loosen its hold upon society, and shake its strongholds into ruin, is inconceivable. The first exodus was not accomplished by one plague, neither will the second. The final judgment will come on in a series of terrific woes. Bolt after bolt will be shot from the great white throne ; and not till the seventh has fallen will the system sink into its burning grave. We shall afterwards see, when we come to consider more particularly this epoch, that the judgment proceeds by seven very definitely marked stages of destruction.

And even though God could overthrow the idolatrous world-power by a single stroke, yet He would not. He would give it time to repent. He will not overthrow even great Babylon without affording her an opportunity of escaping the threatened and merited vengeance. That opportunity may be afforded to little purpose : still it will demonstrate how incorrigibly and unrepentingly wicked she is ; and it will serve to vindicate the holiness of God in the awful severity of her destruction. The pause thus afforded will serve this further end,—it will enable men to mark the Omnipotence of the Judge, and note the order

and grandeur of a drama which it is meant that all ages of the future should remember, and that the Church should celebrate in her songs till the very end of time.

Daniel briefly, John more fully, describes the dispensations of the “Time of the End.” Let us turn to the twelfth chapter of the former. Michael stands up : there is a “time of trouble” such as never was : many that sleep in the dust of the earth awake, some to be clothed with shame, others to shine in eternal honour ; and these troubles are seen to end in the deliverance of all who are found written in the book. Here evidently is the “Time of the End ;” indeed, we are expressly told that it is so. We hear one inquiring at the man clothed in linen who is seen standing on the waters of the river, “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders ?” The man clothed in linen holds up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swears that it shall be for “a time, times, and a half.”

We are here distinctly told that, at the end of the “time, times, and a half,” all these wonders shall take place. But let us mark that the “time, times, and a half,” are the third chronological line. We have already determined its length. It runs on, as we have said, for twelve hundred and sixty years. It embraces the entire period of the domination of Antichrist. It begins at the constitution of the ten kingdoms of modern Europe in A.D. 532, and ends at the subversion of these kingdoms in 1792. But why is this line

again introduced here? Obviously, to serve as a base line on which to measure the two subordinate and supplementary lines, which were about to be announced to Daniel for the first time. These two periods are given in the end of this chapter, and nowhere else.

The man clothed in linen, who had just announced the end of the twelve hundred and sixty years as the time for these wonders, continues,—“And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days’ [years]—(Dan. v. 11). This line is thirty years longer than the line given in the seventh verse. If it begins at the same time with the other, the conclusion is inevitable that it carries us thirty years beyond the other. But most manifest it is that it does begin at the same time with that in verse seventh. It begins when the “daily sacrifice” is “taken away,” and the “abomination that maketh desolate” is “set up;” but so, too, as we have already shown, do the twelve hundred and sixty years. The “daily” or continual “sacrifice,” here foretold to be taken away, was not that presented on the Jewish altars, but the “daily” or continual “sacrifice” of the Christian Church. Christ “abideth a priest continually,” and his sacrifice is a continual sacrifice. “Having paid the ransom for all, he placed it, as the great High Priest, in the heavenly place,—the monument of a redemption that was for ever,—that each individual, as a priest, might present it unto the

father as a ransom for his soul.”* But this continual priest and continual sacrifice Popery took away by the substitution of another priest and another sacrifice, and the erection within the Church visible of an idolatry that banished God’s presence and Spirit from it, converted its ordinances into channels of death instead of life, and so made the sanctuary desolate. At this doleful epoch,—prefigured by the cessation of the literal sacrifices, and the destruction of the temple by the Roman power,—do both lines begin; and seeing they have a common starting point, it follows that the last carries us thirty years beyond the first. What event signalizes its end is not said. But here we are not permitted to pause; for the man clothed in linen, who was upon the waters of the river, immediately adds, “Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” [years]. Here are forty-five years more. Here is a supplementary period of seventy-five years in all. These seventy-five years are manifestly to be added to the twelve hundred and sixty years, which end, in 1792, with the coming of the Ancient of Days, and the sitting of the judgment to take away the dominion of the papal horn, to consume and to destroy it to the time of the end. We are much disposed to conclude that these seventy-five years mark the limits of the judgment-day, and

* The “Mystery of God Finished,” by the Rev. Thresham D. Gregg, D.D., p. 201. See a very full and excellent exposition of the “Continual Sacrifice” and the “Abomination that Maketh Desolate,” in Dr Gregg’s work.

that when they have run out, an era of blessing will open upon the world and the Church ; for it is said, “Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” [years].

What tends to strengthen this belief in our mind is the fact that, when we turn to the rise of the papacy, we find a margin of precisely the same breadth. The political constitution of the ten Romano-Gothic kingdoms was completed under Justinian in A.D. 530-534 ; and the universal lordship of the Bishop of Rome was completed under Phocas in A.D. 604-608. Both the political and the spiritual papacy rose by stages ; and each stage was marked by an imperial edict conveying its additional increase of power. But there is no denying that the two stages that stand in history as the most marked and prominent is the era of Justinian and the era of Phocas. Under Justinian the political papal supremacy was established, and under Phocas the spiritual papal supremacy was established. Under the first the “times and laws” were changed, and under the second the “continual sacrifice” was taken away. Between these two events there was an interval of seventy-five years.* Now, is it not reasonable to think that, as the Church was seventy-five years in going into her papal captivity, she will be seventy-five years in coming out of her papal captivity, and as the ten kingdoms arose seventy-five years before the full legal

* The author has minutely traced, in his “Papacy,” the several stages of the rise of Rome, and has quoted the various edicts thereto appertaining.

recognition of the spiritual supremacy of Rome, so the breaking up of these ten kingdoms at the French Revolution may be found to precede by an equal number of years some decisive blow upon the spiritual hierarchy of Rome ?

Daniel conducts us to the very threshold of the exodus, but he does not show us that exodus. He shows us the people,—their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand,—eating their pass-over in haste, and ready to depart on the morrow ; but he offers no description of the events of that morrow. He shuts up the words, and seals the book, even till the time of the end. He leaves it to John to unseal the book, and to reveal at length the terrors and mighty wonders of the coming up out of Egypt. Nevertheless, Daniel's prophecy is the most extensive and complete in the sacred volume. The visions of the seer of Patmos extend only over the last half of the “ Seven Times ;”—those of the “ Man greatly beloved” stretch over the whole of the “ Seven Times,” comprehending the entire history of the world-power, from its rise to its fall. The period which Daniel's prophecy embraces is emphatically the world's night ; it is the hour of the power of Darkness ; it is the mystery of Divine Providence ; it is the Church's period of humiliation, and of the humiliation of her Lord, whose dominion, as her Head and as the world's sovereign, was veiled throughout it. His prophecy spans the dreary gulf of years which separates the theocracy from the Millennium. But let us mark how his prophecy ends :

it ends with a benediction,—“Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” These words are the daybreak ; they are “a star in the East,” sent to tell the earth that her King is coming, before whose face every oppressor shall flee, and under whose sceptre all the kindreds and tribes of the world shall dwell in peace.

PART II.

THE EXODUS.

THE GREAT EXODUS, &c.

PART II.—THE EXODUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE CRISIS OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

THE fulness of the time was now come : Christ had appeared : his great sacrifice had been offered : the human cycle had touched its nadir ; and though the world was still shrouded in darkness, it had now begun to rise slowly upwards into the light.

The cross was the hinge of the world's destinies. We do not now mean doctrinally, in which sense, no doubt, the statement is true, for the cross is the hinge of the destinies of every individual man, as being the one sole foundation of his hope of eternal life. But the cross was the hinge on which turned the political, the intellectual, and the moral destinies of the world. With steady decadence the world had been bearing downwards upon annihilation, through the in-

termediate stages of universal servitude to its great kingdoms, and of the ineffable and universal corruption engendered by its great idolatries. Philosophy and art had done all for the human race they ever would have done ; and when Christ appeared, a night was settling down upon the intellect of man, which would have known no morning, had not Christ, by imparting to the putrescent mass of society the salt of Christianity, re-quickened the human soul, and given to the world a new lease of existence. Liberty, science, art, as well as the hope of eternal life, flourished anew from his tomb. Paganism had already tolled the world's death-knell : Christ brought it life and immortality.

It may be that we are warranted in going even higher in our statement, and saying that the death of Christ was the turning point in the destinies of the universe. There are numerous intimations in Scripture, obscure and imperfect we admit, which lead us to infer that there are certain effects flowing from the cross which are not limited to our sphere and to our race, but which extend to the spiritual world, and influence its powers and principalities. This at least we know, that it has opened to these beings a new and deeper insight into the divine character and government. But may it not have influenced yet more palpably the great movements of that world, and the position of those by whose instrumentality these movements are carried on ? It would seem as if the death of Christ effected a revolution in the invisible

world, and turned the tide of evil in the high places of the universe. Sin had entered into the creation of God, when we know not, but unquestionably in an age prior to the existence of man ; it may have been long prior ; and who can tell whether it had not continued to spread in the universe up till the death of Christ ? We are well assured of at least one instance of its increase,—one accession gained to the side of evil,—the seduction of our race, to wit. It may be that God selected our world as the point where to make a stand, and, by an amazing display of justice and love in the redemption of our family through Christ Jesus, to set up a moral barrier to the progress of the desolating plague. The cross, then, may have dealt a blow to the kingdom of darkness, the magnitude of which we never can know in the present state. It may have so shorn its great leader of power, and so strengthened all the good and holy influences arrayed against him, as to have materially altered all the conditions of the conflict, and utterly eclipsed all the hopes of success which the prince of the rebel host had till then cherished. He may have felt that now his cause was lost. The book of Daniel gives us some most interesting glimpses into this world, and shows us the concentration of interest and of agency on the part of spiritual beings upon the contest proceeding on the earth. It exhibits the arch-principalities of the universe contending behind the veil, while man is acting before it. And in full accordance with these glimpses are the brief but significant statements of the apostle,

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ : to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God”—(Eph. iii. 8-10). And again, “Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it”—(Col. ii. 15). Every intimation of Scripture on the point in question warrants us in thinking that Satan then sustained a signal fall, and that a disaster unknown till then began to cloud his enterprise.

That Satan’s power over this world and its affairs was materially abridged as the consequence of the death of Christ, does not admit of doubt. What were the precise limits of his power over the human race, and how far he was able to control the world’s affairs by direct spiritual interposition, it is not easy to say. But unquestionably he possessed a large measure of this sort of power in the ages prior to the coming of Christ, in the heathen world. The Jews were exempt in good degree, being God’s theocracy. The kingdoms of the world were Satan’s, and he could gift them to whomsoever he would. If he took empire from one, it was to give it to another who was abler to serve his purpose ; and if he permitted one kingdom to fall, it was only to erect a more powerful in its room. A tide of

unbroken prosperity had flowed in for ages upon the world-power, and now it had reached its acme. No doubt the race was tending to extinction under these terrible tyrannies : liberty was already lost, and letters, arts, and civilization itself, would soon have followed, but for the new principle of social and intellectual life which Christianity imparted. Nevertheless, Satan's kingdom of the world-power had continued to flourish ; it was never higher than when the crucifixion took place ; but from that moment it began visibly to decline, as if smitten by a principle of secret decay ; and, though it struggled through the reigns of the succeeding Cæsars, of the Hadrians, and the Antonines, to recover its Augustan splendour, it was never able to do so. It continued to wane as steadily as it had waxed, till at last it fell before the shock of the Goths. Replaced it was, no doubt, by the Romano-Gothic empire, but that kingdom lacked the unity, the indomitable spirit, and the iron strength, of the first empire. Satan's power was weakened.

True, he made prodigious efforts to recruit his sinking cause. It was at this era that he matured and perfected his system of Popery ; for, though the pristine vigour had departed from the political framework of his kingdom, his cunning, duplicity, and falsehood had now attained their perfection, and they developed in the fully ripened idolatry of Popery. Thus he cast the nations into a deeper darkness than ever ; and in this respect his kingdom was stronger than before. His malignity and cruelty, too, were now inflamed to

an unusual pitch. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea!" said the voice, which was heard crying at the epoch of Satan's being cast down, "for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but short time." But the whole framework of that political organization by which he had upheld his spiritual kingdom for ages had now become disjointed and weakened. The iron was mixed with miry clay. A decided check had Satan's influence received in the higher region of the world's affairs by the death of Christ. Then the prince of this world was judged. Sin had been expiated, on which the dominion which Satan held over man was founded; and thus, although that dominion was not yet taken away in actual effect, it was virtually taken away, and the prince of this world was shorn of much of the authority and influence he had wielded up till this hour. "I saw," says Christ, speaking in anticipation of his death and of the preaching of his gospel, "Satan fall as lightning from heaven." And when the "old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him, I heard," says John, "a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ."

Other indications are not wanting to show that matters about the time of the birth of Christ had come to a turning point as regarded Satanic influences. Daring and adventurous by long success, Satan appears to have

invaded the earth, to have possessed it, as it were, and appropriated the bodies of men as his own. Not content with influencing man through the tyrannies and idolatries of paganism, he laid a closer hold upon him in the way of demoniacal possession. Into what yet more miserable vassalage to Satan unhappy man might have sunk, it is impossible to conjecture. But with the cross came a marked weakening of Satan's whole power. It was now felt that the virtue had gone out of his kingdom. The words "It is finished" proclaimed that its foundations had been subverted, and that, though it might linger in existence for a little while, it was ultimately doomed. The world had passed through its fearful crisis. The great revolution now accomplished began in due time to be seen on earth ; but it is probable that it was immediately felt and conspicuously shown in the invisible world. Nothing short of this can exhaust the meaning of the statements repeated with so much emphasis, that the prince of this world had been judged, that he had been cast out, that he had fallen as lightning from heaven, and that the powers of darkness had been spoiled upon the cross, and, as was the wont with vanquished enemies, made a show of openly at the chariot-wheels of the great Conqueror. And we must regard as confirmatory of these views such information as has reached us through other channels from the spiritual world. We refer to the confessions of the demons during the ministry of Christ, all of whom anticipated nothing from his appearance but a limiting of their influence, and a narrowing of

their sphere. They had broken loose from the abyss, and deprecated what they gloomily foreboded,—being again shut up in it. It is curious also to notice in this connection the silence that is affirmed to have fallen on the pagan oracles at the preaching of the gospel, and the melancholy wailings which mariners are said to have heard as they coasted along by the shores of solitary islands at midnight, accompanied by voices announcing, "Great Pan is dead."

But if Satan was now cast down from the higher regions of influence and authority, Christ openly and effectively ascended into that high sphere. "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." These words might have been sounded up from his open tomb, or cried down from the "everlasting gates" within which he had now entered. In effect they were so. Christ, too, had been in an estate of humiliation. Deep and dark was the veil which had covered his dominion and glory as the Church's Head; but now that veil began to be removed, and the rays of his power and glory to shine forth. How long had Christ's humiliation lasted? We are accustomed to say that his humbled condition began when he was born in Bethlehem, and that it ended when he ascended from Calvary, and sat down on the right hand of Power. Doubtless that was one marked period of his humiliation. The "manger," the "cross," the "tomb," are three words which indicate with emphatic and significant brevity the abasement to which the Lord of Glory descended, that he might

ransom his Church. But this was only the centre of that great shadow whose darkness extended far around over the ages. It was the culminating point of an eclipse through which the Church's Head had long been passing. We are persuaded that the limit we commonly assign to Christ's humiliation is all too narrow. His humiliation began when he entered upon the actual work of mediatorship, and it will continue till the day of the full revelation of the power and glory of his Church upon the earth. In other words, his humiliation stretches from the period of the Fall to the era of the Millennium. During all these ages has Christ's glory, as the Church's Head, and the world's Head for the Church, been veiled. The world has not known Him : it has not known Christ personal, and it has not known Christ mystical ; for his power as the Church's Head has not yet been revealed : the veil still covers it. Of that humiliation the darkest period was the "Seven Times :" it was a night within a night ; and of that inner night the darkest hour was the "cross." No deeper darkness could cover Him, or any being. This was "the curse,"—death with its sting. The crisis of the Church had come, and was now past, in the crisis of her Head ; and from this moment she began to ascend in her now ascending Lord.

In order to enter into the justness of these views, let us think what Christ had become, and what relations subsisted between Him and his Church. Christ was the head, the Church was the members ; but head

and members constituted but one body. But as one body, they could not be divided in their condition. They must needs descend together into humiliation, and they must needs ascend together into glory. They are not twain, but one ; and so much are they one,—so intimate are the relations betwixt them, and so strong the bonds of sympathy that bind them together,—that whatever suffering, humiliation, or shame, befalls the one befalls the other also. Hence it is that the sorrow, distress, and reproach of the Church, in passages innumerable of Scripture are spoken of as being the sorrow, distress, and reproach of Christ ; and so in truth they were ; they were directed against a cause of which he was the representative, and therefore they terminated in and rested upon him. On any other principle, no small portion of the Psalms, and very many passages in the prophets, must be a perfect enigma. Let us take, for instance, the following passage from the eighty-ninth Psalm, verse 38-45 :—“ But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed. Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant : thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground. Thou hast broken down all his hedges ; thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin. All that pass by the way spoil him : he is a reproach to his neighbours. Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries ; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne

down to the ground. The days of his youth hast thou shortened : thou hast covered him with shame." This is a very affecting description of the calamities that overtook the Church at the era of the captivity, and which consisted in the fall of the throne of David, the extinction of the theocracy, and the removal of the Church to Babylon. And yet these calamities are spoken of as all falling on Christ,—the "first-born," whom God had promised to make "higher than the kings of the earth." And, indeed, it seemed as if the covenant of royalty made with him, typified by that made with David, had been made void when the crown of dominion was taken from his Church and given to the world-power. The shadow of that great humiliation fell on the head as well as upon the body. He was not yet incarnate, but it needed not the abasement of the manger and the sorrows of the earthly sojourn to inaugurate his humiliation. Into that humiliation he had already entered. The indignities which his cause on earth was now sustaining reached Him even in the invisible world, and pained Him, as it were, in heaven.

Let not the veil which separates earth from the invisible world narrow or darken our conceptions of this matter. That veil shuts out the principalities of the spiritual world from the view of the Church, but it does not shut the Church out from their view. She is seen by them ; her whole condition is known to them ; nay, she stands represented continually in their view, and in that of the whole invisible world, in the

person of her Divine Head. The prosperity of a kingdom is the glory of its king ; its weakness is no less his humiliation. But how low and depressed was the condition of that kingdom of which Christ was king, and of which he was recognised as such by the whole invisible world ! His kingdom appeared to lose ground from age to age ; and when the theocracy ceased, it seemed to have come to an end. Was there no humiliation here ? There did seem cause to question the power and wisdom of the Church's King. " O, the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble ! why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, and as a mighty man that cannot save ? " was the not unnatural exclamation of the prophet, when he saw disaster after disaster darkening round the Church, and her star steadily declining before the rising splendour of the world-power. But not on earth only, we may well imagine, was this surprise felt. The sentiment of the prophet may have found an echo among the heavenly hosts, seeing, as they did, the strange spectacle of a sinking Church and a growing world-power. Even to them the path by which the Church's redemption was to be accomplished was a path mysterious and unfathomable. The cause of Christ, before it could triumph, had to come low,— very low. Sin can be purged out only with suffering and sorrow. But did the principalities of heaven fully understand this ? Were they prepared to see Christ's Church, and Christ himself, descend into a humiliation so profound ? Were there no doubts of his power and

his wisdom awakened in their minds by the apparently bad success that attended his cause? And how did the rebel host take all this? Did they indulge in no presumptuous hope? Did they give utterance to no impious scoff? Yea, rather did they not confidently and loudly predict the irretrievable ruin of a cause which had suffered so many defeats, and which now, as it seemed to them, had come to the very verge of ruin? Nevertheless, Christ humbled himself, and, "for the joy set before him," continued throughout the ages to pursue that one path by which alone it was possible to work out the redemption of his Church, knowing that victory after extremity so great, and glory after humiliation so profound, would possess a double brightness.

Such is the true cycle of our Lord's humiliation. It is to be counted, not in the few days of his earthly sojourn, but in the long ages that intervened betwixt the fall and the full manifestation of his kingdom in its millennial glory. He stepped down when he became our surety. By that act he identified himself with a fallen race. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He became the Father's servant, and began those acts of condescension and humiliation which the guidance and comfort of his Church rendered necessary. He put on the guise of a man, and appeared to the patriarchs. He became the guest of Abraham. He wrestled with Jacob on the banks of the Jabbok. He spake to Moses out of the bush that burned. He was with the Church during her abode in the wilderness. He dwelt between the che-

rubim in the holy of holies. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old."

He stepped down a second time at the commencement of the "Seven Times," when the crown of sovereignty passed from the Church to the world-power. Although discrowned, He did not leave her: he went down with her into the darkness. And when she went deeper and yet deeper down, He was still with her; for through no valley of the shadow of death did He cause her to pass, through which He did not pass along with her. He was with her in Babylon, as He had been with her in Egypt. As He had intimated his presence in the one case by appearing in the burning bush, so He intimated his presence in the other by coming down and walking beside the three children in the fiery furnace.

He stepped down a third time when He became incarnate, and so identified Himself in nature with his people. He stepped down for the last time when He died. When his humiliation touched the cross it had an end; the curse was exhausted; and where the darkness ended the light began. Need we other proof of our doctrine than the words of our Lord himself? When standing on the skirts of the great darkness, for what does he pray? For the glory he had with the Father before he became incarnate? No; He prays for a glory of a yet earlier date,—"And now,

O Father, glorify thou me, with thine own self, with the glory I had with Thee before the world was,"—the glory I had with Thee before the world was !

Beginning here at the cross, or rather at the open doors of the tomb, Christ's glory will advance step by step towards its universal manifestation. By the same stages by which his humiliation deepened will his glory expand, till at last it shall fill the earth, and not earth only, but also heaven. And as Christ ascends, so his Church shall ascend, rising into ever-widening dominion and power; and this exaltation will go on till the Church is seen seated in the sovereignty of the earth, and Christ is seen seated in the sovereignty of the universe,—all power and authority on earth, and thrones and dominions in heaven, being made subject to Him.

CHAPTER II.

THE SON OF MAN : OR, THE ANTITHESIS.

WE now pass to New Testament prophecy. Like the mariner, when he crosses the equator, and sees new and more beautiful constellations ascend the horizon, objects unseen by us before, or, if seen before, seen dimly and from afar, now rise upon our sight. The kingdom of the Beast begins visibly to recede, and the kingdom of the Son of Man begins to draw nigh,—comes prominently into view.

With these two kingdoms the whole of Revelation is occupied. In the prophecy of Daniel the kingdom of the Beast is the most prominent object. It is not, it is true, the only object, but it is by far the most prominent. It is seen rising bigger and higher, filling the whole stage ; drawing to itself all the power and glory of the world ; eclipsing the kingdom of the Son of Man ; and, one would think, utterly extinguishing it, were it not that a glimpse is obtained of that kingdom when the empire of the Beast is overthrown at the coming of the Ancient of Days.

In the New Testament, on the other hand, the kingdom of the Son of Man is seen as the object of primary

importance. It is small at first ; but it is instinct with a principle of celestial life. It continues to grow ; it fills at last the whole field of vision ; it expels by its own native power the antagonist kingdom from the earth ; and the last glimpse we have of the world, as Revelation drops the curtain, is a truly blessed one, and may well repay us for all the sights of calamity and of woe which had gone before. A serene and glorious light mantles the earth. Peace hath descended on gentle wing. The world is wrapped in a sweet and holy repose ; and the nations and kindreds are seen walking together in love, and dwelling in safety, beneath the sceptre of the Son of Man.

There is an obvious antithesis betwixt these two kingdoms. That antithesis we can trace all through the Bible. It begins on its first page, and it is seen upon its last. That antithesis we can trace in every particular of these two kingdoms ; in all things they are radically and eternally antagonistic ; and every figuration of them in prophecy is markedly and designedly antithetical. A brief consideration of that antithesis, as figuratively shown, will give us a deep insight into the nature and origin of these two kingdoms.

First comes the kingdom of the Beast. Its name is sufficiently indicative of its nature and principles. It was carnal, sensual, earthly. Its members and its objects were carnal, sensual, earthly. The principles of its government were bestial and tyrannical. Force is the attribute of the brute ; force is the glory of the brute :

and by force was this kingdom set up, and by force was it maintained. Man listened to a beast in paradise rather than to God ; and now he is justly punished, by being put under the government of a beast for thousands of years. When developed into the monstrous bulk and brute ferocity in which this beast was seen in the four kingdoms, it might have been said to man, “Behold thy God !” It was now that the fall was consummated.

In antithesis to the kingdom of the Beast stands the kingdom of Man : for “Son of Man” is but an orientalism for man. It is the government of intelligence and justice, in opposition to that of brute force. It is man put antithetically to the beast,—man filled with wisdom, animated by the heavenly influences of clemency, and mercy, and truth, and guided by reason, and that reason subordinated to the will of his Maker. In short, it is the kingdom of Man in the image of God. The phrase expresses God’s whole design as regards man,—namely, the restoration to man of his primeval integrity and happiness in all the extent to which the fall robbed him of them,—the restoration of individual man to his primeval state by the renewing of the Spirit, and the restoration of society to its primeval state by the government of the Bible.

But there is something deeper still in this antithesis. The kingdom of the Beast has more in it than mere brute force, and the kingdom of Man has more in it than mere reason, however purified and exalted. The inner principle of the kingdom of the Beast is an Infer-

nal one, and the inner principle of the kingdom of Man is a Divine one; and it is in this that the antithesis mainly consists. The beast,—the serpent in paradise, and the four monarchies in an after age,—were but the exterior covering or organization. Within that covering lay hid the old serpent the devil, who deceived the nations. The kingdom of the Beast, therefore, was not tyrannical merely,—it was diabolical. It was a system of demonology. And the kingdom of Man was not the government of reason merely,—it was the government of the Eternal Word, the Son of God.

The antithesis is farther to be traced in the “coming” of the Beast and in the coming of the Son of Man. There was a “coming” of Satan, just as there was a “coming” of Christ; but there is this difference to be noticed betwixt the two “comings.” The “coming” of Satan was a continued process of exaltation; the “coming” of Christ was a continued process of humiliation. Each successive stage in the first brought a new access of power and glory: each successive stage in the second brought a fresh diminution of dominion and influence. Satan came in the progression of the four monarchies. Each monarchy rose upon the world in greater power than that which had been before it: each monarchy furnished Satan with a fitter medium of operation: each monarchy was a fuller and clearer revelation of Satan’s character: each monarchy was a more vivid and faithful representation of Satan’s image. Christ was “the image of the invisible God, the brightness of the Father’s glory.” The four kingdoms were

the image of Satan, the shadow of his darkness. He stood incarnated in them. How much nearer he would have come to man,—what yet more exact and terrible likeness of himself he would have given on earth,—we cannot say; for at this stage of his “coming” the cross interposed its “Hitherto, but no farther.”

Christ’s “coming” was from the foundation of the world; but it is from the “cross” that his coming in his glory dates. Each successive phase of his kingdom has shone upon the world as a clearer illustration of the Divine principles and laws, and as a more faithful likeness of Christ’s person and character. It has filled a wider and yet wider sphere. As a clear and broad revelation of truth, the Reformation Church surpassed the primitive one. The Reformation one will, in its turn, be far surpassed by the Millennial Church.

Let us mark how this antithesis is farther brought out in the prophetic figurations of the two kingdoms. Let us take the prophecy of Daniel and the prophecy of John, and place them side by side. We find they are designedly counterparts. On the opening page of both there is a glorious image of the power which each respectively introduces. The pictured likeness is first seen; and then comes the historical detail, giving at full length the character. On the first page of Daniel stands the “great image” which rose before Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, in form so terrible and brightness so excellent. On the first page of John stands “one like unto the Son of Man.” Here begins the contrast at its lowest point. The antithesis is placed

in that *life* which the one wanted and the other possessed. On the one side we have the dead image,—on the other the living man. The one is the kingdom of death, the other is the kingdom of life. Subsequent visions still farther unfold and illustrate the true character of each; but these visions still maintain the antithesis. In the second representation, or the night visions of Daniel, “four great beasts” are seen to pass across the stage; and in the second vision of John he beholds “a lamb as if he had been slain.” The contrast here is between the wild beast and the lamb,—between the bestial and tyrannical principles on which the one was to rule, and the meekness and truth of the other. Especially is indicated here the sacrificial character on which our Lord’s dominion is founded. The one power came to destroy; the other came to save. The one is the reign of destruction; the other is the reign of peace.

A third illustrative vision is given of both. The kingdom of the beast culminates in the horn, with its eyes of craft and its mouth of blasphemy; and the kingdom of “the Son of Man” culminates in the rainbow-clothed angel, standing on the sea and the dry land, in token of that universal dominion which He exercises as King of his Church. Thus all the leading visions of the world-power in Daniel, and all the leading visions of the Divine power in John, are designedly counterparts of each other.

The subordinate parts of both visions are so arranged as to bring out the antithesis with yet more

fulness and point. The beast is seen rising out of the abyss ; the Son of Man is seen descending from heaven. Nothing could convey a more vivid idea of the utter contrariety of origin and character existing betwixt the two. The one has seven heads, or, which is the same thing, sits upon seven mountains ; the other walks in the midst of seven candlesticks. The beast, then, is shown to us surrounded with those seven great kingdoms which had upheld and propagated his idolatry ; while Christ is seen in the midst of those seven churches which, illumined with his own brightness, became the organs of diffusing his light over the earth. Let us mark this apparently trivial but not uninstructive point. While the beast has for its seat the seven mountains, and so is upheld by them, the Son of Man holds the stars in his right hand. Idolatry required to be upholding by the kingdoms of the world, but Christ by his own power upholds the Church.

Few symbols have more divided opinion than the seven heads of the beast. From what we have just said, it will be seen that we dissent from the modern interpretation which explains these heads of the seven forms of government successively adopted at Rome, and that we incline to the most ancient of all views regarding these heads. The world-power is here depicted, we are inclined to think, in its totality, as it existed throughout the "Seven Times," and the seven heads represent the universal monarchies. "With regard to the beast," says Auberlen, in his criticism on

Hoffman's view, who revived this opinion in modern times, "the interpretation of the heads, as denoting the world-kingdoms or ages of the world, is found in the writings of Irenæus and Hippolytus, more distinctly in Andreas of Cesarea in Cappadocia, who lived in the end of the fifth century, of whose commentary Lücke says, that it is the first connected commentary on the Apocalypse, and the root of all succeeding ones."* These seven heads or kingdoms were, Assyria, Babylonia, Media, Persia, Grecia, Rome, the ten kingdoms. The first five had fallen in the days of John, as was intimated to him (Rev. xvii. 10); the sixth or Roman was then in being; and the seventh had not yet come into being,—the Romano-Gothic, to wit. We must necessarily conceive of the beast as different from the seven successive heads in which he had lived. Though in one sense the beast and his heads were identified, in another they were distinct. These kingdoms were but his body; paganism was the soul. This was strictly the beast,—the old serpent the devil. That beast appeared to have been wounded to death when the empire became Christian. But soon the empire lapsed again into paganism, and so the beast returned from the abyss, fulfilling the prediction—(Rev. xvii. 11)—"The beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." He belonged to all the seven; he had lived through-

* "Auberlen on the Prophecies of Daniel," p. 403.

out them all ; but as he is “the son of perdition,” so he goeth into perdition.*

Now, let us mark the antithesis. As the Beast is seen surrounded with the great political organizations which had upheld and propagated his idolatry in the world, so the “Son of Man” is seen surrounded with the Seven Churches, the organs through which his light and rule were to be diffused over the earth. The beast brings in his train, as the ministers of his will, Assyria, Babylonia, Media, Persia, Greece, Rome, and, finally, the ten kingdoms of modern Europe ; and Christ comes followed by the seven burning lamps,— Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea. The first we may regard as emblematic of the whole of that power, material and political, which was arrayed in support of idolatry ; and the second as equally emblematic of the Church in every age and in all countries. In fine, when the world-

* Regarding these seven kingdoms, *Hoffman's* view is the following :—“The five kings which are fallen are the Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, Greek, and Antiochus ; Rome's Caesar is the sixth ; the seventh, whom John expects, is the Germanic.” *Hengstenberg* gives the same list of monarchies as forming the seven heads of the beast, only he leaves out Antiochus, and prefixes Egypt. (Vol. ii. 458, 459.) *Ebrard's* seven heads are the same as *Hoffman's*. *Auberlen* (p. 271, 272) agrees with *Hengstenberg*, and so does *Principal Fairbairn*, who, almost alone among modern British expositors of Prophecy, takes this view of the seven heads. (See his able work on Prophecy.) The arrangement the author has adopted is somewhat different, and has this merit, that the seven monarchies embraced in his list run in the line of the image, and are all indicated in it.

power is seen concentrated in its seventh head, it has ten horns ; and when the Divine power is seen concentrated in the woman, she has twelve stars upon her head. By its horns the beast executed its will, and made himself be worshipped by those who dwelt upon the earth. Through her stars,—the doctrine of the twelve Apostles,—the Church radiated her light around her, and illumined the world.

A farther point of contrast may we note. Forming the frontispiece, so to speak, of Daniel's prophecy, stands the world-power, begirt with the terrors of tyranny, a burning fiery furnace behind it, and in its mouth a threatening of death against all who should refuse to fall down and worship. On the front of John's Revelation stands Christ, encompassed with celestial glory, and addressing his Church in words which convey an assurance of life, and are in studied contrast to the threatening of death of the world-power. “ Fear not : I am the first and the last : I am He that liveth, and was dead ; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, amen ; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

CHAPTER III.

THE APOCALYPSE, OR UNVEILING.

THE *Apocalypse* is the unveiling of Christ. While Christ was on earth he was veiled : the book of the *Apocalypse* is the removing of the veil. It is not a mere doctrinal exhibition of his divinity : it is a record of a matter-of-fact revelation of his great offices as the Church's Head and the world's Sovereign.

When the cloud received Christ out of the sight of the disciples on the threshold of the heavenly world, it was then that He began to be seen in his essential power and glory as God. It was then that He sat down on the Father's right hand, and began that mighty series of providences which he has ever since been carrying forward, and the final end of which is the overthrow of his enemies and the universal establishment of his kingdom. Each act in this series is a glorious display of his power,—an illustrious monument of his Godhead ; and the book which contains, as the *Apocalypse* does, the symbolic record of these mighty acts, is fitly termed the “unveiling” of Christ.

It was not till the disciples knew Him no more

after the flesh that they began to know Him after the spirit. Even they could not look clearly through the veil that covered Him. It was only after his ascension, when, by the Spirit's help, they began to see that the humble man who had been their companion on earth was now the occupant of heaven's throne, and the ruler of the destinies of the universe, that they began to form something like adequate conceptions of his glory. It was needful that He should depart, as He told his disciples ; for so long as He was here He could not unveil Himself. There was not room on earth, so to speak, for the revelation of his glory ; for, though some feeble rays had shone through the disguise He wore, as at the grave of Lazarus and on the "holy mount," his glory required a universe for its full display. He must, before the Church, before the thrones of the world, before the principalities of darkness, and before the angels of heaven, disclose his omnipotent power ; and this He could do only while directing all events, and controlling all creatures, from the throne in the third heavens. This book exhibits him occupying this supreme seat, wielding this supreme government ; and so is justly entitled, by way of eminence, the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ.

There was, it is true, an initiatory unveiling of Christ on earth, preparatory to that wider unveiling that was to take place from a higher point. In his personal ministry, the great offices with which the Father had clothed Him shone forth one after one. The disciples, and in some respect the world too,

could say, "We saw his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father."

First, He was seen as a Prophet. "He came preaching the gospel ;" for it was necessary he should announce, first of all, who He was, and on what errand He had come, in order to lay a foundation for the farther unveiling of his official fulness and essential dignity. In his discourses, what simplicity and sublimity! what wisdom and beauty! what authority and majesty! All felt that He was a teacher come from God. Compared with Him, what were the great sages of antiquity, Plato and Socrates? Compared with his doctrine, what was the philosophy of the heathen world? It was as darkness to day. Compared with Him, what were all prophets? Here was One the latchet of whose shoes they were not worthy to stoop down and loose. A great light had risen upon the earth.

In the second place, He was seen as a Priest. All minor acts culminated in one grand act ; and in that act his pre-eminent glory as a priest shone conspicuously forth,—his death upon the Cross, to wit. He expiated sin, and thus his sacrifice was eternal, and his priesthood unchangeable. From that instant all other sacrifices and all other priests conclusively and everlastinglly ceased. What need of them, when the veil was now rent, and the way into heaven stood open? And what an eternal sacrifice kept open, no man could render more open.

In the third place, Christ revealed himself as a King. His glory as a King was seen in his coming forth from

the tomb. By his rising from the dead, He was shown to be the Son of God with power,—the Prince of the kings of the earth. The revelation of Himself was now complete : all that could be seen of Him on earth was now seen. He had been unveiled first as *the Prophet*, second as *the Priest*, and third as *the King*: there was room on earth for no more. It was necessary he should ascend.

He did now ascend ; and then opened the great Apocalypse. The field of illumination immediately enlarged : the glory hitherto confined to the inner circle of his disciples began to shine forth in acts of mighty power before the world and before the universe. But let us mark, that the order of revelation in this outer sphere was the same with that which we have just traced in the inner and narrower one. First, Christ revealed Himself to the world as the world's great Prophet. This He did through the Church, which he sent forth to be the world's teacher. " Go, teach all nations," was the commission given her. The truth communicated to her she was to communicate to the world, in opposition to the falsehood of pagan philosophy and idolatry. The prophetic office of her Lord was the great object of the Church's testimony-bearing during the first three centuries. Her claim was liberty " to speak in the name of Jesus,"—liberty to act the part of a prophet in the name of the Great Prophet.

Next Christ began to reveal Himself to the world as a Priest. Paganism had denied Christ's prophetical

office. That office was vindicated when Paganism fell before the preaching of the Cross ; but the Roman Church, though she accepted Christ as a prophet, repudiated Him as a priest ; and now began the witness-bearing of the true Church in behalf of the priesthood of our Lord. Popery, by its doctrine of the mass, impugned Christ's true and sole propitiatory sacrifice ; and by its army of intercessors, human and angelic, it denied Him as the one Mediator. Accordingly, for ages, all down to the Reformation, the main article in the Church's Confession,—the one glorious truth that shone forth in all her contendings and martyrdoms,—was, that Christ was the one and only Priest, and that his sacrifice alone had power to take away sin. Christ's priesthood was signally unveiled at the Reformation, in the promulgation, by the Reformed Church, of the doctrine of the perfect, exclusive, and everlasting efficacy of his death.

There remained yet another office of Christ to be confessed and vindicated before the world,—the Kingly, to wit. His office as a King was the last to be unveiled in his personal ministry ; and accordingly, it was the last to be unveiled after he ascended to the right hand of power. The Church had to fight during the first centuries with Paganism for the prophetical office of Christ ; she had next to fight with Romanism for the priesthood of Christ ; and since the Reformation she has had a continuous battle to maintain with anti-Christian and Erastian governments for Christ's prerogatives as King of Zion,—his sole and supreme right,

through the Bible, to rule in his own house. It is instructive to observe, that the order in which these several offices come into view in the career of the Church is the same in which they had previously come into view in the life of Christ. Christ lives over again in his Church. Her mission is but the Saviour's ministry reproduced on a wider stage.

To this hour the Church has not had her true position recognised by earthly kingdoms. Her progress has been jealously watched, her rights denied, her powers fettered, and her action withheld, over the entire of Christendom, with some anomalous exceptions. That another kingdom should exist on the earth, reigning in virtue of a divine and inherent jurisdiction, claiming complete independence of secular authority in all things spiritual, and owning the Bible as its sole law, and Christ as its sole king, is an idea not to be endured by the kingdoms of the world. But to this supreme and glorious issue,—the moral reign of Christ over the nations through his Word,—does the Church's testimony point, and do all providences tend. This issue will be completely reached in the overthrow of the anti-Christian confederacy. This will complete His unveiling. When the world shall have accepted his gospel as its one revelation, his death as its one sacrifice, his Word as its one law, Himself as its one King,—then will be His coming—His glorious kingdom—the Millennium.

The same progression can be traced in the Apocalypse. So we should expect it to be, the Apocalypse

being a faithful representation of history. In that book Christ is first seen walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,—the Prophet. Next He is seen as “the Lamb as if it had been slain,”—the Priest. Next He is seen as the rainbow-crowned angel, standing on the sea and the dry land, symbolic of his dominion as a King. And, last of all, He is seen on the great battle-field, with “many crowns” upon his head, and “on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, —‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’”

David, ages before, had celebrated this grand unveiling in perhaps the noblest of his Messianic odes. That ode the Church had been singing,—and to this very day continues to sing,—with but a narrow conception of its mighty import. The hundred and tenth Psalm, in its seven stanzas, traces the Messiah through the successive stages of his glory, from his session on the right hand of God, to his final victory over all his enemies at the Millennium. Let us turn to that psalm.

This psalm is a prophecy of King Messiah. It embraces a period of not less than two thousand years. It is the picture of a great battle-field,—the history of a conflict of twenty centuries. Here that mighty Conqueror,—who has on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, “King of kings,”—is seen going forth, and scattering in victorious battle, first the pagan, and next the anti-Christian powers. The vista runs along the entire line of the gospel dispensation. Epoch after epoch is seen to rise in the psalm, as afterwards

they rise in history. This ode is the counterpart of the vision of the “great Image.” He who put the history of the world-power into the compass of a dream has here put the victories of King Messiah into the compass of a short ode. This psalm began to be fulfilled on the day when Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives ; it has ever since been in course of fulfilment, and it will be completed on that day when the Church has sung her alleluiah over Babylon, and the announcement has been made that the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. The drama of this psalm is in truth the same with that of the Apocalypse. It opens where the Apocalypse opens, and it closes where it closes,—even with the same great and decisive victory,—“ the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

Let us mark the several stages of Christ’s unveiling, as here brought prophetically before us. This psalm opens with Christ’s entrance into heaven, and his session on the right hand of God. “ The Lord (the Father) said unto my Lord (the Son), sit thou at my right hand.” Such was the Father’s welcome to the Son on his return from his work on earth. The history in the *Acts* enables us to trace this wondrous scene but a short way. Our Lord ascends in the chariot of the cloud, and soon he passes beyond our sight. But this psalm opens the everlasting doors, and enables us to see what takes place in heaven on our Lord’s entrance. We behold patriarchs, and prophets, and martyrs, as He comes forward, casting their crowns at

his feet. We hear the seraphim and the cherubim, as He passes on through their ranks, ascribing to Him glory, and dominion, and blessing. But all this is nothing to the yet higher honour that awaits Him. The Father rises from his throne, bids Him welcome, and seats Him beside Himself. And thus, in the sight of all the principalities of heaven, in the sight of those very principalities who had looked on with wonder when He endured his agony in the garden, and who had looked on with yet greater wonder when He hung upon the cross, proclaims his eternal Deity, his full acceptance of his work, and the unlimited sovereignty to which, as Mediator, He had raised Him. Then was fulfilled what John had seen in vision,—even the Lamb, who was in the midst of the throne, taking the Book of the Divine Decrees, and proceeding to the great work of ruling.

The next scene which this psalm opens to our view is the mission of the Spirit at Pentecost, and the first triumphs of the gospel. “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion : rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” Christ had enemies when He sat down on the right hand of God. The world was in rebellion against Him. Some few friends He had in it; but, alas ! how few ! a small company of disciples at Jerusalem,—about an hundred and twenty in all. The rest of the world lay in the wicked one : its kings and its nations, Jew and Gentile, were under Satan. They had just crucified Christ ; and they stood ready to oppose his kingdom to the uttermost. But that rebellion

Christ would put down ; and that very world, now in arms against him, He would yet make the scene of his peaceful and triumphant reign. But with what weapon would Christ conquer the world ? Not by arms, but by the gospel,—the rod of his strength sent out of Zion. “ Preach,” said He, “ beginning at Jerusalem.” No desolation gathers on the track of this conqueror : no wail of woe is heard where his chariot passes : his battles are not with “ confused noise and garments rolled in blood :” He subdues his enemies by converting them into friends. “ He small smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall He slay the wicked.”

Accordingly, the next scene that rises before us in the psalm is the early Church, in the freshness of her first prosperity, with a goodly train of converts following “ in holy attire.” “ Thy people (are) free-will offerings in the day of thy power, in holy decorations, from the womb of the dawn, to thee (is) the dew of thy youth.”* The era that succeeded Christ’s ascension was a remarkable one. Wherever the apostles and the first preachers came,—whether to Greece and Rome on the one side, or to Egypt and Asia on the other,—the pride of philosophy, the authority of power, the bitterness of sect, the blindness of barbarism, yielded to the gospel : converts were numerous, and churches arose everywhere. This was the day of Christ’s power : it was the morning of his day : his people were made

* Translation by Professor Alexander of Princeton.—*Alexander on the Psalms*, vol. iii. p. 104. New York edition.

“ free-will offerings ;” and from “ the womb of the morning” Christ had the “ dew of his youth.” How sweet the image ! It recalls the daybreak, when plain and mountain, lawn and wood, glitter with the pearly dew,—so numerous, pure, and beautiful were the converts of that morning. It was a morning after a long night ; and in that morning the whole pagan world began to be suffused as with the glow of sunrise. “ We are but of yesterday,” said Tertullian to the Roman authorities, “ and we have filled everything that is yours,—cities, islands, castles, free towns, council-halls, the very camps, all classes of men, the palace, the senate, the forum. We have left you nothing but your temples.”

But at this point in the psalm, as afterwards in history, a dark cloud descends upon the scene. We touch the verge of the papal night. There is here an abrupt transition, and the priesthood of Christ becomes suddenly the prominent object. Why is this ? This is explicable only on our theory,—namely, that the psalm is a prophetic history of the New Testament era, and that its several stanzas are just so many stepping-stones by which we are brought down from the Apostolic to the Millennial Church. On no other theory can we discover significance or trace order in its abrupt and brief allusions. On this theory all is intelligible and consecutive : the vista runs on from the Mount of Olives to the gates of the new paradise. Let us mark what a chain of events follow in the psalm, interpreted on this principle, and follow in the exact order and

progression in which they follow in history. In the first verse we see Christ's installation : next comes the mission of his apostles, in the rod of his strength proceeding out of Zion : next is seen the prosperity and purity of the primitive Church, in the image of the morning dew. Contemporaneously with these events, Paganism is seen to fall ; for Christ, by the "rod of his strength," rules in the midst of his enemies. But now, at this stage, that prosperity is cut short by the rise of Romanism, obscuring and denying the priesthood of Christ. But the Father, anticipating the rise of that system, and in order to assure the Son that no attempts of the Man of Sin to obscure that glorious truth should be ultimately successful, and that his priesthood should be as eternal as his deity, thus speaks,—“The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou (shalt be) a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

The former verses show us Christ revealing his prophetic office,—unveiling Himself to the world as the great teacher of truth, in opposition to the lies and falsehood of Paganism. This verse shows us Christ revealing his priestly office,—unveiling Himself to the world as the one Mediator and the only priest, in opposition to Popery, which was as direct a denial of Christ as a priest, as Paganism had been a denial of Him as a prophet. The oath, the Father now assures Him, by which he had been consecrated as a priest, could not be broken. Rome would thrust herself into his functions by her pretended priesthood : neverthe-

less He should remain through all ages the one way to God ; his sacrifice the one ground of acceptance with God, and his priesthood unchangeable and eternal. Like Melchizedek, successor He should have none : his mitre should be worn by no other ; and on the altar on which He had offered, meaner sacrifice should never be laid. He was made a priest, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."

Yet another epoch rises in the psalm. This time it is Christ the King who appears before us. He had already come forth as a Prophet ; He had next unveiled his glory as a Priest ; and now, last of all, He stands before us in royal majesty as a King. This consummates the unveiling. He is seen by the Church, by the world, and by the universe, as Prophet, Priest, and King. Now He is glorified with "that glory which He had with the Father before the world was."

His title is won upon the battle-field. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." The Church, in the person of David, had been speaking all throughout the psalm : she is still speaking ; and in this verse she celebrates, in the hearing of God the Father, the exploits to be performed by God the Son, who sits at his right hand. "He shall strike through kings." What kings ? The ten kings who had made war with the saints. This psalm looks back upon the second Psalm, where "the kings of the earth" are seen setting themselves "against the Lord and against his anointed ;" and it looks forward

to the Apocalypse, where the “kings” of the papal earth are of one mind to give their power to the beast, in his persecution of the saints. When shall the Son strike through these kings? In “the day of his wrath,” we are here told. This day is the same with that “great day” so often foretold by the prophets. It is the day of the wrath of the Lamb,—the day of which the kings had been warned in the second Psalm. This is none other than that great conflict with the anti-Christian powers which John symbolically exhibits in the closing page of the Apocalypse as preceding the Millennium.

“He will judge among the nations: He has filled (them) with corpses: he has smitten the head over much land (or over the wide earth).”* The first clause certainly implies the idea of a judgment-day,—the setting of the great throne,—“the inquisition for blood,—the exposure of evil, both in its principles and in its acts. That vengeance is notified by one brief but terrific phrase,—“He shall fill the places with the dead bodies. This terrible slaughter† is undoubtedly the same to which the prophets point in almost these very words, and the same with that unexampled carnage which the Apocalypse reveals. “For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many”—(Isaiah, lxvi. 16). This is the “sacrifice in

* Translation by Professor Alexander of Princeton (vol. iii. p. 108), in which he follows Rivet.

† “Gravissima strages et ultio.”—Rivet, p. 477.

Bozrah," and the "great sacrifice in the land of Idumea," which is to make the sword of the Lord "fat," and to fill the mountains of the mystic Edom with "his slain men"—(Isa. xxxiv. ; Ezek. xxxv). This, too, is the same battle-field on which John saw the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army;" and which, after the conflict, exhibited the spectacle of a field drowned in blood, "even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs"—(Rev. xiv. and xix).

"He shall wound the head over many countries," or, "He has smitten the head over the wide earth." The "head" here is not collective: it indicates not many rulers, but one great ruler. The clause foretells a yet deeper stroke on the hostile interest than even that of the overthrow of the kings. It predicts a mortal blow to the supreme potentate and ruling head over these kings. It is Antichrist himself that now falls,—the beast with "the seven heads and ten horns." Nay, it is a deeper stroke still: it smites the Devil, who was the animating soul of the beast from the abyss. The passage looks back on paradise, where the sentence was passed upon the serpent,—"He shall bruise thy head ;" and it looks forward to the Apocalypse, where we behold the prediction fulfilled in the casting of the beast and the false prophet,—vanquished on the last great battle-field,—"into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone," and the binding of the "old

serpent, which is the Devil and Satan," with a great chain.

Having smitten the head of the great confederacy, and so consummated his victory, the Conqueror stoops to drink, and, refreshed thereby, lifts up the head. The action is plain ; but no expositor has clearly shown us its significance. Rivet, in his learned and judicious commentary on "The Prophetical Psalms," thinks that Christ is here viewed in his humbled estate, and that the "brook" of which he drank denotes his sufferings.* The ordinary expositors, following him, accordingly make the "brook" the cup of the curse. Calvin's exposition is more natural, but still not free from objection. It is to the effect that Christ, pursuing his foes, and hastening to deal the decisive blow, stoops momentarily to drink of the brook in his path, and resumes his victorious career. But at the stage of the drama at which this action is placed the battle is ended, and the leader and prince of the hostile armies has been laid low. The reference must be to some event occurring at the close of the great conflict, and which visibly contributes to the final triumph. We are disposed to think it can refer only to the effusion of the Spirit after the fall of Antichrist, and immediately before the Millennium. The influences of the Spirit are often likened to "a stream" or "a river;" and the breaking out of these streams is foretold to happen after the "day of vengeance" and the "year

* Andreæ Riveti Commentarius in Psalmos Propheticos, p. 480-82. Lugduni Batavorum. 1626.

of the redeemed." "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys," said God by Isaiah. And let us mark how the "brook" in this verse stands contrasted with the "dew" of verse third. The one was the Pentecostal era, when the first drops of the Spirit fell ; the other is that copious shower,—that river of Divine influence,—which is to water the Church in the latter day. And let us also mark the harmony of this idea with the apocalyptic drama. It is after the overthrow of Babylon, and the binding of the real author of all the opposition, that John sees "the river of the water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." The only objection that can be taken to this interpretation is, that it is Christ who drinks and is refreshed, and not his Church. But we must remember that the triumph of the Church is Christ's triumph ; and that, in the words of Rivet, "the Church is the mystical body of Christ, in which the Messias suffers and fights,"* and, we may add, triumphs. Christ mystical, refreshed by this brook, will lift up the head.

So much for what we take to be the right interpretation of this remarkable psalm. It stands among the Messianic odes as Tabor among the mountains ;—it has a comprehensive perspicuity and concentrated glory which are all its own. Rival it has none ; and we do not wonder to find it honoured above all the other psalms by the special notice of our Lord and his apost-

* "Mysticum Corpus Christi, in quo Messias patitur et pugnat."—*Andreeæ Riveti Commentarius*, p. 440.

tles. It is a glass in which we can trace the whole history of the gospel Church,—the whole conflicts, conquests, and glory of her King. It enables us to look all the way from the Mount of Olives, last touched by the foot of the ascending Redeemer, to the banks of that river, clear as crystal, which is seen in the new paradise going forth to re-clothe the earth with fertility and beauty.*

* The author may be permitted to say, that this exposition of this psalm, he humbly thinks, may remove not a little obscurity which has hitherto rested upon it. It presents it as a consecutive drama, full of significance. The author is also satisfied that almost all the Messianic psalms are arranged in dramatic order ; and that an exposition of them on this principle would evolve with wonderful clearness their gospel meaning, and enable Christians fully to enter this “ chamber of holy voices.” He has often marked with pain how totally many Christians misconceive the scope and spirit of the psalms. “ Why,” say they, “ should we continue to sing of the deliverances and victories of the Old Testament ? Give us psalms celebrating the events of the gospel dispensation.” The psalms do celebrate the events of the gospel dispensation ; nay, more, they are almost entirely taken up with these events,—many of them yet unfulfilled. The psalms celebrate the events passing over the Church at this hour, and are as suitable to be sung by Christians as if they had been written in this nineteenth century.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TYPE AND THE ANTITYPE : OR, THE FIRST AND
SECOND EGYPTS.

WHEN we open the first pages of the Bible, we find ourselves in the valley of the Nile. The mighty river, rolling onward with bounteous flood, waters the land, and creates a garden, where, but for it, the sun would look down upon burning sands. On either hand lie fields of the richest fruitage ; and aloft, above the various products of the valley, the palm uprears its stem, and displays its graceful crown. Man, too, strives to cover the soil with the monuments of his industry and the trophies of his skill. Already has he taught the tall obelisk to rise to heaven, with its mysterious scroll, charged with the secrets of these early days. Here the pyramid displays its severe grandeur, and rivals, in mountainous bulk, the everlasting hills. Nor are temples awanting, whose cyclopean wall and ponderous roof form the colossal shrine of some puny divinity. And here are proud cities, their streets trodden by busy throngs ; while sentinels keep watch on their ramparts, and marshalled hosts are seen to issue from their brazen gates. With these evidences before us, it

needs no one to tell us that the nation occupying the valley of the Nile has already grown to greatness in arts and arms.

Egypt has said to herself, "I sit a queen, and shall be the world's head to all generations." And where, it may be asked, could empire have found a securer home? With the Nile bringing plenty, year by year, on its spreading wave, and the great desert stretching its arms like a rampart around Egypt on every side, how impossible is it that here power should ever fall from its throne! The Egyptians have builded for all time. Works so colossal are meant to see the close, as they have witnessed the dawn, of history. How evident is it that the Egyptians have reckoned on a long, as they have enjoyed an early, tenure of empire!

In truth, the sources of Egypt's greatness seemed as stable and unalterable as nature itself. What power could dry up the Nile? And while their river continued to flow, and the sun to shine, how impossible that the harvests of that land should come to an end! Other cities might be stripped of their bulwarks: how impossible that Egypt could ever be reft of hers! Was not her wall the desert? Was not her defence impregnable? Here knowledge had lit its lamp; and here it should continue to burn to all time. Enriched with plenty, crowned with peace, embellished by art, and guided by wisdom, what shall hinder Egypt being a lady of kingdoms for ever?

But hark! What cry is this that strikes upon our ear? It comes from the brick-kilns. A foreign race,

held in slavery by their Egyptian lords, here perform their daily tasks under terror of the rod. How crushing their burdens ! How mercilessly their rulers smite them ! Not a jot of their appointed tasks will their oppressors abate. Every new day brings heavier burdens : every hour sees an increase to their bondage ; and from that bondage there is no escape but through the tomb. The labours of these unhappy slaves are at once the source of Egypt's splendour and the cause of her approaching downfall. The proud monuments and the great cities that beautify the land,—the boast of the Egyptian and the admiration of the stranger,—what are they but the double witness of the wrongs of the Israelites and the tyranny of the Egyptians. The cup of the one's suffering and of the other's iniquity has long been filling up. The great Avenger has now pronounced it to be full. “ I have heard the groanings of my people which are in Egypt, and I am come down to deliver them.”

But in what quarter will deliverance arise, and what form will it assume ? Will it come with observation ? Will its advent be heralded by signs in the heavens and by wonders on the earth ? Let us turn our eyes to yonder desert on the east of Egypt. Lo ! there comes a man, his face turned towards that land where tears flow copious as the Nile, and where groans ascend unceasingly to heaven. But is this he ? Is this the deliverer ? He carries neither bow nor sword. He has no army at his back. He comes onward, staff in hand, like any ordinary pilgrim ; and in this unwar-

like fashion advances against the marshalled chivalry of Egypt. Ah ! there seems little here to awaken hope in the bosom of the captive,—little to create alarm in the breast of Pharaoh.

He comes nearer ; and now we recognise in this mysterious visitor the very man who had been chased from Egypt forty years ago, and who had lived since that day as a shepherd amid the hills of Midian. We see him enter Egypt ; we see him stand before Pharaoh ; and now we hear him open his great commission,—“Thus saith the Lord God, let my people Israel go, that they may serve me.” How startling ! “My people !” we hear the monarch exclaim : “Have not the Israelites for generations been the property of the crown ? Manumit the Hebrew slaves, stop all the great works in Egypt, derange the whole economy of the nation, tolerate the very worship of Jehovah in the land of Osiris, and crown all by sacrificing the gods of Egypt before the face of the Egyptians !” The frown mounts to the monarch’s brow, and the demand of Moses is promptly and sternly met by the refusal, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go ? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” Thus the king of Egypt throws down the gauntlet to the King of heaven, and the great controversy begins. We become the awe-struck spectators of that controversy, as justice urges its demand, and power meets it with arrogant refusal ; and the contest proceeds amid the thunderings and lightnings of Jehovah’s wrath, to the tragic terrors of its close. Suf-

fice it to remark, that the gates which the power of the king keeps closed the earthquake judgments of God fling open, and the Hebrew captives march out over the ruins of the once great and flourishing kingdom of Egypt.

So far this drama. What is its interpretation ? Is the drama acted and over ; and, like the kingdom where the scene was originally laid, has it passed away, and is it never more to be seen on earth ? No. This which we have been contemplating is but the shadow : the great reality yet awaits the world. Egypt was but a symbol,—a glass, into which if we steadfastly look, we shall see a greater tragedy enacting. The men of the first ages beheld the type ;—we see the events themselves. They saw the image and likeness of the future, though at the distance of four thousand years ;—we see the future itself. This forms a link of no ordinary interest between the first and last ages of history,—between the first and last tragedies of the Bible. Let us make Egypt the glass in which to contemplate the great drama of the Apocalypse.

When we do so, we find that the literal scene and the literal actors are changed ; but in all essential particulars the drama is the same. Earthly power and heavenly authority are still in conflict. It is the old battle not yet fought out. We look into the glass ; but it is not now the valley of the Nile, with its pyramids and its temples, that rises before us. It is Europe, with its ten kingdoms and its white Alps,—white, alas ! not with their snows only, but with the

bones of martyrs. It is not now the Pharaoh of Egypt, but the Pharaoh of the Seven Hills, who throws down the gauntlet, and bids defiance to the messenger who addresses him in the name of Jehovah,—“ Let my people go.” This is a vaster prison than the early one. This is a longer captivity than the first. And bitterer, too, by a thousand times, is the bondage which has here been endured. Not a foot-breadth of the soil of her vast prison is there which the Church has not watered with her tears and moistened with her blood. We look over Europe from north to south,—from the calm waters of the Adriatic to the billowy Atlantic ; and everywhere, if we except our own country, we see the Church in bondage. Everywhere we see the truth suppressed : we see it made a crime to read the Word of God, or even to possess a Bible. We see it declared a crime to worship God through the one Mediator, or to profess belief in the great cardinal doctrine of the New Testament, that faith alone in the sacrifice of Christ justifies and saves the sinner. We see these things punished with banishment, with confiscation of goods, with imprisonment, and not unfrequently with death,—death accompanied with horrible torments. We look back into history, and find that this bondage has been prolonged for upwards of twelve centuries. Unspeakably gloomy is the whole vista, onward even to the first ages. Edicts of proscription ; blazing fires, in which the witnesses of Jesus are tormented ; scaffolds flooded with the blood of martyrs ; and a great cry from beneath the altar, “ How long ?”

—such are the spectacles that meet our eye when we turn it upon the past of Europe. Is not this the *real* Egypt?

Let us look again into the glass, and mark the second stage of this great drama. The same Moses who had fled from Egypt returns at the end of forty years, and demands liberty in behalf of the Hebrew captives in the name of Jehovah. “And I say unto thee,”—such are his words before Pharaoh,—“let my son go, that he may serve me; and if thou refuse to let him go, behold I will slay thy son, even thy first born.”

The same demand has been addressed to the triple-crowned king of the Seven Hills. That demand has been made less formally, but not less really. God has sent his message, not by the hands of a prophet or of an angel, but, in accordance with the principle we have explained in a previous chapter, by the instrumentality of one of those mighty dispensations which He now makes the ministers of his will. The Reformation was the Moses whom God sent to Papal Europe in the sixteenth century. The Reformation was just primitive Christianity returned,—that Christianity which was the child of a Hebrew mother, which had been in danger of perishing, like Moses, by the edicts of persecuting emperors,—which had been received temporarily into the protection of the empire, but afterwards had been driven out, and found a refuge among the shepherds of the Alps. That Christianity which had fled to the wilderness in the sixth century re-

turns in the sixteenth. It addresses all Papal Europe through the Reformation. And what is its demand ? Liberty for the Church of God ; the abolition of all restrictions on freedom of conscience and freedom of worship :—“ Let my people go, that they may serve me.”

We can see the messenger crossing the Alps, as Moses the desert. He carries neither buckler nor shield. There is no mustering of hosts behind him. We see him walking along on the highway to the seven-hilled city. His steps are on the marble threshold of the Vatican. He stands in the presence of the modern Pharaoh, and thus addresses him :—“ I come from that God whose prophets you have slain, and whose altars you have cast down. Thus saith the Lord : Israel is my son, my first-born : let my son go, that he may serve me. And if thou refuse to let him go, behold I will slay thy son, even thy first-born.” On the answer to be returned hangs the fate of Papal Europe. The alternative to the second, as to the first Egypt, is submission and safety,—disobedience and ruin.

Let us look a third time into the glass, and observe the next stage of this drama. Pharaoh rejects the message ; and not only does he deny to the people liberty, but he proceeds to make a grievous addition to their burdens. “ And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore : let them go and gather

straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore ye shall lay upon them ; ye shall not diminish ought thereof : for they be idle ; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein ; and let them not regard vain words"—(Exodus, v. 6-9).

From Egypt let us turn to Papal Europe. We have seen the messenger God sent in the sixteenth century : we have heard the demand of that messenger. What was the reply ? Did the Pharaoh of the Seven Hills proclaim liberty to the Church ? Did he open the gates of his house of bondage ? Nay, rather, did he not that very hour issue orders to all his task-masters—to every prince and every inquisitor—to increase the burdens of the people ? He had chastised his captives with whips : now he began to chastise them with scorpions. Rome had been a murderer from the beginning. Already had she burned the bones of Wickliffe, and planted the stake for Huss ; already had she embrued her hands in the blood of the Waldenses and of the Bohemians ; but her more appalling persecutions,—her more awful tragedies,—were those which she committed after the Reformation. The demand the Reformation addressed to her irritated her ; and, frenzied with fear and rage, she began a wholesale slaughter of the saints of God. Yes, Rome gave her answer to the demand of Jehovah, " Let my people go," when she built the inquisition : she gave her answer when she planned and executed the St

Bartholomew massacre : she gave her answer when she covered Spain with *autos da fe*, France with dragoonades, England with fires, and the Low Countries with gibbets and corpses. Rome gave her answer when she wrote in her statute-book that decree of blood which stands unrepealed to this hour, and which enacts that heretics and heresy are to be purged out by burning.

Let us look into the glass once more. The drama now begins to draw towards its final and more terrible stages. Moses has gone forth from the presence of Pharaoh ; but though the monarch had yielded no compliance, the doom threatened did not immediately descend. Space was given for repentance. But when it was seen, in the continued and aggravated bondage of the people, that Pharaoh was fully purposed to defy God and oppress Israel, Moses was commanded to stretch out his rod towards heaven, and then began the plagues by which Egypt was smitten.

After the demand of the Reformation had been addressed to Rome, space was given her for repentance. God waited for her a full two hundred years ; and how were these years spent on the part of the apostate Church ? The world was shaken with wars and reddened with blood, from the efforts of Rome to suppress the Reformation. The years of grace ran out ; the period of waiting came at length to an end ; the rod was stretched out towards heaven ; and quickly came an era of judgment, whose plagues were of a character and on a scale which no former age had

witnessed. Already the image of that judgment had been seen ; for what were the ten plagues of Egypt but types of the yet greater plagues which are to pass in terror over the papal earth ? We are now invited to contemplate the Great Exodus,—the final outgoing of the Church. This is the day of which all the prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi, have spoken. Drama unprecedentedly terrible and sublime ! It is not now a single kingdom, but a world, which is to pass away, with its thrones and hierarchies, its institutions and laws, its civilization and arts. As the sun of its last day rises, it is seen apparently as strong as ever ; its riches, its armies, its political power, are all undiminished. But suddenly its stability departs ; law and order are no more ; the hailstones of war smite its earth ; the blood of conflict reddens its sea and dyes its rivers ; the stars of its political firmament are shaken and fall ; and along its darkened heavens the awful voice of nations in revolution is heard to roll. The last awful and nameless plague consummates its ruin ; and now it lies a fearful wreck,—a scene of perished splendour. It is through the midst of these tremendous judgments that the Church is to find a path to the land of her rest.

CHAPTER V.

THE COMING OF THE ANCIENT OF DAYS.

IT is the year 1780. We can imagine the Roman Church climbing the Vatican Mount, and from its summit looking far and wide over the European commonwealth. The spectacle that meets her eye is one well fitted to minister to her pride, and to beget in her a fatal presumption of security. Around her dwell the subject nations in unmurmuring submission to her yoke. The little kingdom of Britain appears irretrievably lost ; but she scarce misses it, in the brilliant constellation of mightier States that still pay her homage. On the whole circle of the horizon there is not a cloud of even the bigness of a man's hand. All around reigns a perfect unbroken calm, giving apparent promise of a continuance of her power, and a peaceful and triumphant reign, running far into the future. Well pleased, she surveys the prospect. Pride mantles royally on her brow ; and from her mouth comes the swelling boast,—“ I shall sit a queen for ever.”

Already two terrible woes had passed over her. First came the Saracenic irruption. Issuing from the deserts of the East, these fanatical but martial hordes

carried their conquests from the Euphrates to the Straits of Gibraltar. Sweeping round the sacred territory of the Church, and tracing their path in blackness and ashes, the chivalry of Spain had recoiled before the irresistible impetuosity of their assault. Their tents already glittered on the summit of the Pyrenees. A few marches more, and the Crescent would surmount the domes of the Eternal City, and Mohammed would be proclaimed where the Pontiff reigned. But an invisible power rolled back the Saracenic deluge, and saved Rome from the doom that threatened her. It looked like an interposition of Heaven in behalf of the chair of Peter. So was it interpreted at Rome.

Next came the Turkish woe. These hordes, which had lain bound in the river Euphrates,—for Heaven, in his much-enduring pity, was unwilling to loose so terrible a scourge upon the human race,—now had leave given them to go forth on their terrible path. They advanced from province to province, from victory to victory. Barbarous, fierce, unskilled in any art, knowing only their terrible mission, which one emphatic word expressed,—“to kill,”—they inflicted on the Eastern Church the doom of extermination. Where the Saviour’s name had been preached, but where latterly it had been blasphemed, they proclaimed the name of Mohammed; and where the Cross had been lifted up only to be dishonoured, they planted, in derisive and avenging triumph, the Crescent. The Saracens were empowered to “torment;” the Turks were commissioned to “kill.” Both were sent as agents of

vengeance on the apostate Eastern Church ; and accordingly, though the Christianity of those regions, in its then grossly corrupted state, survived the invasion of the Saracens, it was rooted out by the conquests of the Turks, who crowned their victories with the capture of the capital, and the seat of the chief bishop of the East—Constantinople.

The Turks pushed forward on their path of plunder and death into the West, till even Rome, amid her revels on the seven hills, was startled by their shouts. They came nearer every hour. What a warning ! Rome's idolatrous sister of the East they had cut down : had they a similar mission to execute on Rome herself ? For a time her doom appeared imminent. But—how marvellous !—a potent voice said a second time to the awful scourge,—“ Hitherto, but no farther.” An unseen but impregnable rampart seemed to rise around the sacred territory of Rome. So at least she reasoned when she beheld this second tempest roll away, and leave her unscathed. In 1774, the allied armies of Russia and Austria rid her finally and for ever of the Turkish plague. Thus the monitions of Divine displeasure, and the warnings of future and certain vengeance, did Rome interpret into tokens of peculiar regard, and assurances of perpetual continuance. The very providences which were intended to humble and save, served but to harden and destroy.

Amid these scourges of wrath there came to Rome, as we have already shown, a messenger of mercy. The Reformation preached in her hearing the one brief,

potent sermon of the Prophet of the Desert,—“Repent.” Its powerful voice was heard sounding amid the gorgeous fanes of her idolatrous worship, amid the luxurious palaces of her mitred hierarchy, and saying,—“ The axe is laid at the root of the tree. On thy idolatrous sister judgment has fallen. Repent, else thou too shalt be cut down. Thou wert a noble vine when apostolic hands planted thee on the seven hills. How art thou become the vine of Sodom! Put away thine idols : cease to persecute : love the truth : learn to do well. Repent. It is the last call ; for there cometh one after me mightier than I, whose fan is in his hand ; and He will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner ; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Alas! the warning fell on an ear deaf as the adder’s, and an heart judicially hardened as the nether mill-stone. Rome could part with her Master : with her idols she could not part. She could live without the favour of Heaven ; she could not live without the friendship of princes. She greedily prized not to be rich in faith, but to be rich in honour and gold. She put away the sackcloth and ashes of repentance, as a burden too painful for the flesh, and continued to array herself in the purple and the fine linen. Not only so : her career from this time became more precipitous and headlong. By greater crimes did she burden the earth ; by lewder idolatries did she affront Heaven. In vain did the Reformation cry “Repent.” In vain did judgment thunder at her gates.

Rome was sleeping the deep sleep of spiritual stupor. On her the ancient threatening had taken full effect:—“ Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes ; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.”

From this hour the Roman Church was judicially given over to destruction, but her doom did not immediately descend : her cup was not yet full. The “ Seven Times” of the Gentiles had not yet run out. They were drawing, it is true, towards their close. All the great chronological lines, as we have already shown, were converging, in streams of fire for Rome, in rays of light for the Church, upon the end of the century now running, the eighteenth. But till these lines should meet,—and the year swiftly approaching —1792—seemed to be their meeting-place,—Rome’s day of tranquillity was prolonged.

Accordingly, in 1780 she was still seen occupying in peace her ancient seat. The mighty spiritual movement of the sixteenth century appeared to have spent its force. The great lights which had irradiated the seventeenth century, enriching the world’s theology with immortal works, and ennobling the annals of England and of Holland with names that will never die, had sunk beneath the horizon. All now was dark where once they had shone. The eighteenth century rose under a starless sky. That century passed on, but the dark night seemed only to grow darker ; or, if stars broke through, they were the baleful stars of scepticism.

In the icy chill all generous and noble things withered. Art, science, discovery, political progress,—all were arrested ; demonstrating Christianity to be the grand motive-power of the world ; and showing that when it moves, all moves ; when it stands still, all stands still. Over the whole of Protestant Christendom the ice of a semi-infidelity lay thick and deep. The pure glory of Geneva had paled before the gathering fogs of Arianism. The little Holland, forgetful of its brave fight with the greatest of European monarchies, and its after brilliant literary and commercial career, had lost at once its theology and its renown. Germany, the giant which in Luther's days wrestled with Rome, had been drugged to sleep, and lay bound with the cords of Rationalism. England had sunk into gross Arminianism ; and Scotland was pining away in the mephitic atmosphere of Moderatism. Seldom have the prospects of the world been more dismal than at this era. Every living thing was dying on the earth, and every ray of light was fading from the firmament. It seemed as if there awaited Rome an easy conquest of slumbering nations. But though Churches might fall asleep, and a sceptical world might scoff, saying, “Where is the promise of His coming ?” the epochs of the sure word of Prophecy were not to be altered, nor their fulfilment to fail. The great periods of the ancient seers were running on,—were approximating their convergence. At last they converged ; and then, all suddenly, rudely breaking in upon the stillness and darkness of the age, a terrible noise was heard, a terrible

shock was felt. An ally on whose help the good had not reckoned, a foe on whose vengeance the wicked had not counted, came up from the very bottom of society, dislocating and rending in pieces the whole framework of the social edifice as it forced its way to the surface, discovering the foundations, and proclaiming its advent by the crash of thrones, the wail of hierarchies, and the cry of agonized and frenzied nations. This is the Revolution of 1789, consummated in 1792.

This epoch is unmistakeably stamped with the signs of the great Judgment-day. True, the bodily eye can trace no Form amid the clouds and tempests of that era ; but does the moral sense see no One ? Let it look behind the veil. There, in burning glory, is the great throne, with One sitting upon it, judging the nations, his garment white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool. Silent has He sat for ages in the heavens, as if He saw not the crimes which were being done upon the earth, and heard not the cry of the blood which was being poured out like water. Rome offered holocaust after holocaust, yet vengeance awoke not. With fire and sword did she pursue for ages the confessors of the Alps, staining their snows with carnage, filling their valleys with groans, and darkening their mountains with the smoke of burning dwellings. The awakening life of Italy she stifled in the dungeon, on the rack, and at the stake. All over Spain for many a dismal year blazed the baleful fires of the *auto da fe*. How often did she water the plains of France

with martyr-blood, choking up its rivers with corpses, littering the streets of its cities with dead bodies, hunting the virtuous and industrious of its peasantry upon the mountains, shooting them down as if they had been wild beasts, and propelling, by her ever-recurring edicts of proscription, wave after wave of naked, famished, and woe-stricken exiles towards the frontier ! What frightful hecatombs of victims did she offer in the Low Countries ! The annals of that unhappy land show little less than a whole century of continuous butchery.* And what butchery ! How horrible and astounding the modes of torture and death which the fiendish ingenuity of the persecutor devised, and his hellish cruelty inflicted, upon the God-fearing people of that nation ! The dumb animal under the knife of the butcher dies by natural violence ; but these perished by violence unnatural and appalling. Not content with despatching her victims with the knife or with the cord, Rome drew life from them by slow, ingenious, and excruciating tortures. She stretched them upon the rack : she broke them upon the wheel : she nailed them upon crosses : she roasted them at slow

* See “*The Rise of the Dutch Republic*,” by John Lothrop Motley. The author can scarce too strongly recommend this work. By laborious research into the original documents of the period, Mr Motley has effected a *resurrection* of the men and the events of those times. No one can say that he knows the history of the period till he has read Motley, however familiar he may be with Robertson. The work throws a new and amazing light upon one of the grandest dramas of Providence. These remarks apply to the “*United Netherlands*,” by the same author.

fires : she boiled them in cauldrons of oil : she tore them by wild beasts : she hacked them in pieces : she buried them alive. By other modes, too shameful, cruel, and horrible for the pen to record, did she despatch these confessors of the truth. Was Rome ashamed of these awful deeds ? Did she seek to hide them from man ? Did she seek to conceal them from God ? Nay, rather, did she not sing *Te Deums* in their honour, and strike medals to keep them in everlasting remembrance ?

Still vengeance slept. Century followed century laden with untold guilt : one generation of martyrs after another poured out their blood, and the earth opened her mouth to receive it at the persecutor's hand. No sign appeared, giving token that what was now done on earth had caused displeasure in heaven. The throne of iniquity seemed to have fellowship with God. Dominion and glory were still meted out to Rome. Her's were still the purple and the fine linen. To the confessor was the robe of sackcloth, the *sanbenito*, the rack, and the gibbet, where his flesh became meat to the fowls of heaven, and his bones hung bleaching, a spectacle to men. From the dens and caves of the earth, where they dwelt with beasts of the desert less cruel than the human tigers from whom they had fled, how often did the prayer ascend from these sufferers,—“O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth ; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth ; show thyself. Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth : render a reward to the proud. Lord, how long shall the wicked,

how long shall the wicked, triumph ? How long shall they utter and speak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves ? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it !”—(Psalm xciv. 1-7).

Meanwhile the ages wore on. The last two centuries of the “Seven Times” were now current. The great voice of the Reformation had been heard in the wilderness of the papal world, proclaiming the coming of the Son of Man, and saying,—“ Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make straight in the deserts a highway for our God.” In the awful deeds of her last days Rome was but filling up her cup, though she wist it not. The shadow had gone down many degrees on the dial of the world-power, and unmistakeably indicated the near approach of a great crisis. But, besotted through long indulgence in unrequited crime, Rome marked not its ominous decline. Suddenly there came forth “fingers of a man’s hand,” and wrote upon her palace-wall the words,—“The cycle of thy kingdom is numbered and finished.” In a moment the lights of the political heavens were put out. A fearful darkness shrouded the Roman earth. The deep mutterings of the distant thunder were heard, rolling nearer and louder every hour. The kings were perplexed : the nations were angry : the earth shook : the Judge descended, and the books were opened.

Let us mark how this epoch wears the likeness, strong, broad, and unmistakeable, of the great earthquake,—of the judgment-day,—of the sitting of the Ancient of Days. The dispensation needed no one to interpret it. With a voice of thunder did it proclaim to the world its mission.

Let us note the agreement between this epoch and the great predicted era of retribution, first in point of time. What says the gnomon of prophecy? Let us examine it. The shadow comes up and up till it touches this epoch of Revolution, and then it stops. Nay, not one, but three witnesses bear record that this is the “hour of judgment.” Here is one line, projected all the way from the era of Shalmanezer; and mark how, stretching across the ages, it touches 1792. Consider the contrast presented by the events at the beginning and at the end of that line. At its commencement the world-power is seen mounting the throne: at its termination it is suddenly cast down in the terrible overthrow of the French monarchy,—the then representative kingdom of the fourth empire. The second line, look where it terminates. Projected from the acme of the Medo-Persian power, it too touches 1792. And, once more, the third line, running from the rise of the ten kingdoms, terminates at 1792, the epoch of the begun destruction of these same kingdoms. Is it not sufficiently striking that the convergence of these three lines should be the point where this pillar of cloud and fire is seen to rise?—that at the instant these lines meet, and, by their meeting,

proclaim that their cycle is completed, the political horizon of the papal world should be suddenly overcast, and an event new and strange should burst upon men, and, instead of exhausting itself by its first awful woes, should open out into decade after decade of revolutions, wars, and misery? Pausing for a moment, but only to recruit its terrors, and resume with fresh power its work of destruction, it has now for seventy years been thundering and lightning above Europe. There is an impression on the minds of all, that at this hour it is mustering its forces for a wider and more terrific outburst than any that has yet taken place. Nothing will it leave standing of all that appertains to her in whose skirts is the blood of the saints. It will continue to destroy, till nothing remains to be destroyed of the "great image." It was utter extermination which the world-power pronounced upon the Church. The decree has passed upon itself. The mission of the great revolution is,—"Raze it, raze it, even unto the foundation."

Let us mark, in the second place, the agreement between this event and the predicted vengeance, in point of place. The seat of this revolution is the area of the fourth kingdom. To that locality did prophecy point. It was the feet and the ten toes of the image, the mingled iron and clay, which the monarch in his dream saw smitten by the stone, ground to powder, and carried away by the winds like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors. These iron feet pressed upon Europe; and in Europe did these whirlwinds of revo-

lution break out. What other countries and systems they may draw within their devouring vortex, and drag down into perdition, we cannot say ; but here had they their birth ; and here, around the political structures that upheld the papal idolatry, did they expend their first and most destructive rage. The throne over which they burst was the most powerful of the thrones of the papal earth,—the leading political horn of the ten,—the representative of the fourth monarchy, and the lineal descendant, in a sense, of that man to whom had been shown in vision the prosperous career and terrible end of the world-power. France, outwardly viewed, had never been stronger than at the moment its monarchy suddenly dissolved and vanished. First the decay of the German empire, and next the prostration of Spain, had left it without a rival in Europe. Noble cities were rising on its soil, commerce was springing up on its sea-board, its arts were flourishing, its throne enjoyed the respect of neighbouring nations, and an era of literary brilliancy had opened upon the nation. Voltaire, who finds four ages of glory in the past history of mankind, places the fourth in the days of Louis XIV. ; adding, “it is perhaps, of the four, that which approaches the nearest to perfection. Sound philosophy was discovered only in this age ; and it may with truth be said, that from the last years of Cardinal Richelieu to those that followed the death of Louis XIV., there happened a general revolution, not only in our government, but in our arts, minds, and manners, which ought to be an

eternal epoch of the true glory of our country.”* Had Voltaire lived a few years longer, he might have been abler to estimate at its real worth the “philosophy” which he here so highly extols. Both he and Rousseau went down into the tomb as the upper edge of the black cloud began to be seen above the horizon, turning its golden lining to the deceitful lights of this same philosophy. This, however, affects not Voltaire’s testimony as regards the pre-eminent position and outward prosperity of France in the age of the grand monarch. Nor had it in the reign of his descendant, Louis XVI., outwardly declined. The glory of the house of Bourbon was advanced, in some respects, to even a higher pitch of grandeur. Much of the inheritance of Charles V. had come into possession of France by the death of Charles VI. in 1740.† “Although distracted within,” says Bungener, speaking of France but four years before the Revolution, “France without was more powerful in Europe than it had been since the time of Louis XIV.”‡ It was on France,—the seat of a brilliant court, the theatre of arts, letters, and philosophy, the centre of political power, the head of the papal world, and the “Eldest Son” of the Church,—that this devastating tempest descended. The Bourbon was “at rest in his house, and flourishing in his palace,” like his prototype twenty-five centuries before, when there fell a voice from heaven, saying,—

* *Age of Louis XIV.* p. 3. Ed. 1753.

† *Ibid.* p. 384.

‡ *Julian, or the Close of an Era.*

"O king, to thee is it spoken ; the kingdom is departed from thee."

Let us mark, in the next place, the pre-eminent significance that belongs to this event. It is the one political revolution of all time. From Nebuchadnezzar's days to our own the world had been undergoing change after change ; but these changes left the world unchanged, compared with the great upturning of the French Revolution. These changes had been accomplished by a force acting upon the world from without ; this was effected by a principle acting upon it from within. These were done by the sword ; this by opinion. These gradually and imperceptibly passed the one into the other ; this suddenly, and as if by trumpet's summons. This was the creation of a new age. On that day Europe passed under a new political and social dispensation. The French Revolution sounded the knell of the Gothic period. It swept away the ideas and maxims which the nations had brought with them from the forests of Germany. Nay, it sounded the knell of the pagan period, which had in reality prolonged its reign till now. It was the uprising of the human intellect against the superstition and despotism which had governed the world from Nebuchadnezzar's days onwards ; and all the wars which have followed have resulted from the struggles of these two principles to put down that mental revolt which had hurled them from their seat, and to mount once more to their old ascendancy in human affairs.

Let us farther mark, that if this revolution put

down the master principles which had hitherto borne rule in the earth, it installed in their room, as the two regulating powers in society, the directly opposite principles. The French Revolution inaugurated the reign, though in the midst of much attendant disorder and destruction, of representative government in the State, and of freedom of conscience in the Church. The Reformation had already introduced these principles into the Protestant States ; but it was the French Revolution which opened, by the passage of its burning wheels, a way for them in the papal world. It said to “Right Divine,”—the corner-stone of old Europe,—Depart : your place is in the sepulchre : there deep sleep awaits you. Go and rest beside the mouldering dust of past ages, which you decked out in all the bravery of crowns and mitres, and robes of golden embroidery. You loved the darkness : there it will be full deep : not a ray will ever break in to disturb the quiet of your repose. Gather up and carry with you all your stage machinery, your triple crowns, your sceptres of iron, your anointing oils, your high-sounding titles : take all with you to the tomb, and keep them there till the world shall need them. Thus the Revolution shook the old heavens and the old earth, that a higher power than it might erect the new.

It is also worthy of being taken into account, in judging of the true character of this era, that it was the Revolution which put a stop to persecution in France, and gave civil and religious liberty to the Protestants. France was one of the great battle-fields

on which the Reformation measured its strength with Rome. A Protestant France would very probably have given us a Protestant Europe. But in France the battle of the Reformation was lost. The apostacy of the king, Henry IV., and the desertion of the nobles, mainly contributed to this unhappy result. In that hour France turned aside from the path of liberty, and entered on that which led to Revolution. Even then, had she purged her eye, she might have seen, though yet afar off, the guillotine. But she refused to lift the veil. She decreed that Catholicism should live, and that the Reformation should die. Catholicism did live, but it lived to be her destroyer. The Reformation, nevertheless, did not die. Though banished from the court, though driven from the schools, though exiled from the nation, and surrounded with stakes and edicts of proscription, it lived. But ah ! what a history has been that of the French Protestant Church ! How sad, yet how glorious ! It was decreed that heresy should be utterly extirpated, and the French Protestants were overwhelmed by edicts of proscription and death. In the half-century that elapsed betwixt 1680 and 1730, no fewer than an hundred and twenty of these cruel edicts may be counted. Every vestige of civil right and of religious liberty was torn from them. They were forbidden to celebrate their worship ; their assemblies were prohibited ; and death was the penalty of attending a religious meeting. A price was put upon the head of their pastors ; and these men wandered about without certain dwelling-place.

Their home was the cave, among woods and torrents. Their assemblies for worship were held in the desert, with the dragoons ever on their track. They could not bury their dead in open day. The graves of their children were often dug in their cellars or in their gardens ; and the bodies of their friends were conveyed to their resting-place under cloud of night. They could not procure registration of their marriages, and their children were held to be illegitimate : they were shut out from all honourable employment. If they fled from the country, their property was confiscated ; if they remained in it, they were thrown into prison, or sent to the scaffold. “No branch of the Church of Christ, as their historian, M. de Felice, observes, “has been for a longer period under persecution than the Reformed Church of France.” The persecution of the French Protestants extends from 1524, when the first martyr of the Reformation, Jacques Pavannes, was burned alive in the Place de Grève at Paris, to 1775, when the last two Protestant galley-slaves, Antoine Riaillé and Paul Auchard, were released, after thirty years’ confinement. With a few brief intervals of respite, the Protestant Church of France was in the furnace three whole centuries. She entered it at the dawn of the Reformation, and she left it just as the first ominous mutterings of the coming hurricane began to be heard. Who can count the number of her victims ? There were periods when they perished in hundreds of thousands, and when literally “rivers of blood” watered France. We are filled with astonish-

ment at the woes of that Church : we are filled still more with admiration at her endurance and heroism.

M. Bridel of Lausanne has given, in eloquent and affecting terms, a description of the spectacles which were but too familiar in France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the miseries which then, and for many years afterwards, overwhelmed the Protestants of that kingdom. The Revocation was not the less infamous that a pope sang a *Te Deum* in its honour, and Bossuet pronounced an eloquent oration in its praise :—

“ A short time after the Revocation, the galleys and the convict prison of Marseilles contained more than six hundred Protestants : there were nearly as many at Toulon. Dunkirk and other ports also contained a great number. Most of these were fugitives surprised and arrested in their attempted emigration. The highways were furrowed with long trains of these unfortunate people, who, from different provinces, were being dragged to this frightful captivity. On all the public roads in the kingdom, says an historian, these unhappy convicts might be seen walking in large companies, with heavy chains round their necks,—the most inconvenient that could be found being given them ; many of these weighed more than fifty pounds. They were forced to travel by long stages ; and when they fell down from weariness, they were roused by blows of a stick. The bread given them to eat was coarse and unwholesome ; and the avarice of their keepers did not allow them enough of that to support life. At

the end of the day's march, they were lodged in the filthiest prisons, or in barns, where they lay on the ground without any covering, or being relieved from the weight of their chains.

“ Some years ago, Admiral Baudin gave a description of the condition of the Protestant galley-slaves in the eighteenth century, drawn from the best sources of information, while he was making a military inspection of the ports of Marseilles and Toulon. One circumstance which lends additional interest to the researches and communications of M. Baudin, is the fact that this superior officer of the French navy, who died a few years ago at Paris, a good Protestant and Christian, was born and educated in the Romish communion.

“ ‘ The regulations of the galleys,’ he says, ‘ were then excessively severe. This fact explains the vast amount of mortality in proportion to the numbers condemned. The convicts were chained in couples to the benches of the galleys ; and they were employed in moving long and heavy oars,—an exceedingly painful service. In the centre of each galley, between the benches of rowers, extended a kind of gallery, on which the overseers constantly walked, having each, as a whip, the nerve of an ox, with which they struck the shoulders of the unfortunate men who did not row with sufficient energy to please them. The galley-slaves passed their lives on their benches ; they ate and slept there, without being able to move farther than the length of their chain permitted, and having no

other shelter from the rain and the heat of the sun, or the cold of the night, than a cloth which was stretched as an awning over them when the galley was not in motion and the wind was not too violent.'

" Add to this, the hideous livery of the convicts, the red cloak, the shaving of the hair and eyebrows, the cork gag suspended round the neck ; for, in certain manœuvres, all the convicts were gagged. And to such sufferings,—to this horrible coupling with the vilest criminals,—thousands of men were condemned, whose only crime was their religious belief,—their fidelity to a proscribed worship. Extreme youth and grey-headed age were mingled there ; for on the benches of these hateful floating prisons were seen young lads of fifteen, and octogenarians."*

To this affecting account we may add the eloquent peroration of a sermon by M. Saurin, preached at the Hague in 1710, in which, in the name of all the refugee Churches, he gives utterance to his feelings on the subject of these persecutions :—

" ' Are our prayers exhausted ? ' cried the great orator. ' Alas ! in our days of joy should we forget our sorrows ? Happy inhabitants of these provinces, —often as you have heard the tale of our sufferings, —while we rejoice in your prosperity, you will not withhold compassion from our calamities. And we, brands plucked out of the fire, sad fragments of our

* The Pastor of the Desert : Sketches of Paul Rabaut, and the French Protestants of the Eighteenth Century. From the French of M. Bridel, pasteur, Lausanne. P. 95.

unhappy Churches ; we, my dear brethren, whom the misfortunes of the times have cast on these shores, shall we forget the suffering remnants of our own body ? Groans of captives, pastors in tears, virgins outraged, solemn feasts interrupted, sanctuaries deserted, apostates, martyrs, scenes of blood and cries of anguish ;—let the long catalogue of woes touch the heart of this assembly. ‘ If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning ; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.’ May peace be within thy walls ; may God be moved with the extremity of our misery, if not with the fervour of our prayers ; with the desolation of our sanctuaries, if not with the calamities of our lot ; with the exigencies of those immortal souls of which the persecutors would despoil us, if not with the wants of these frail bodies which we drag from country to country.’’*

To the French Protestants was given grace to suffer ; and the virtues they displayed in the furnace redounded to their own honour, and to the praise of Christianity. What courage on the field of battle ! what constancy on the scaffold ! what patient and hopeful waiting amid the multiplied horrors of that long, long night, whose hours seemed years, and whose years grew into centuries ! Nor was that waiting in vain. But, ah ! little did the French Protestants dream by what “ terrible things in righteousness ” God was to answer their

* The Pastor of the Desert, p. 9.

prayers. The Revolution was the gate of deliverance. Even "scepticism," the "true philosophy," as Voltaire called it, though it tempered the intolerance of the court, and restrained the bigotry of the priesthood, failed to loose the fetters of the Protestants till the Revolution came to break them. When "the day of wrath" opened in France, the last martyr-blood was scarce dry in her soil. She was caught in the act when the messenger came to seize her. When carried in chains before the judgment-seat, her hands were red, her sword was dripping. Thus, up till the eleventh hour, nay, till the trumpet of the Judge's coming struck upon her ear, did France continue her work of persecution.

It is true, a concession was made to the Protestants in 1787, just eighteen months before the Revolution. But that concession, how paltry and contemptible ! The Protestants were allowed to bury their dead in open day, and to have their births and marriages registered before the officers of justice. They were acknowledged as subjects. This was all. They were still denied the public exercise of their religion ; they were still shut out from judicial employments and from the liberal professions ; they were still excluded from the schools ; they were not recognised as a community, or permitted any organization or rights ; they simply could live in France without being imprisoned or hanged for not being Catholics. Nevertheless, this measure of mockery and insult was felt as a relief by the Protestants, and was received by them

with the liveliest gratitude. They owed it mainly to the liberal statesman Breteuil, and the learned academician Rulhières, seconded by the distinguished soldier La Fayette, and the venerable and philosophic Malesherbes. Stinted as this concession was, it could not be published without encountering the opposition of the priesthood. The priests had caused Louis XVI., at his coronation, to take the ancient oath by which the kings of France were bound to exterminate heresies. On that occasion, Lomenie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, addressed the monarch thus:—“We entreat you, Sire, do not delay to deprive error of the hope of having among us its temples and altars. . . . It is reserved for you to strike the last blow at Calvinism in your dominions.”

The world's wise men sometimes prophecy truly. Little, we may imagine, did M. Lomenie de Brienne suspect the fulfilment which awaited his words. Many a terrible blow had the throne of France dealt the Protestantism of that country; but it was reserved for Louis XVI. to strike the last blow that throne was ever to inflict. An event was hurrying towards France, on the wing of the whirlwind, which was destined to sweep himself, his throne, and his dynasty, from the earth.

Such was the position of the French Protestant Church when the great Revolution arrived. It found it in fetters, and these fetters it broke. On the 21st August 1789, the Constituent Assembly, with special reference to the Protestants, solemnly declared that

“ All citizens, being equal in the eye of the law, are equally admissible to all dignities, places, and public employments, according to their capacity, and without other distinctions than those of their virtues and talents.” Two days later, at the sitting of the 23d August, the Assembly proclaimed the right of complete religious liberty, by decreeing that “ No one is to be interfered with for his opinions, even his religious opinions, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law.” *

Let us note the remarkable contrast, which stands out so prominently, betwixt the beginning and the end of the “Seven Times.” At the commencement of that epoch, Nebuchadnezzar is seen standing beside a burning fiery furnace, and, in virtue of his sole irresponsible will, publishing a decree to “all peoples, nations, and languages,” that whosoever should refuse to fall down and worship the image he had set up, should the same hour be cast into that furnace of fire. That decree of intolerance had stood in force ever since. More unchangeable than the laws of the Medes and Persians, this edict had never altered. Conscience lay under its ban during the whole period of the reign of the four kingdoms; and whosoever dared to bow the knee to any god save the king’s, was straightway crushed by the iron hand of despotism. His doom was the burning fiery furnace. But now a new age had arisen, and the law fell. The Constituent Assembly of France

* History of the French Protestant Refugees, by Charles Weiss, Professor of History at the Lycée Buonaparte, p. 529.

repealed it, as publicly and as solemnly as it had twenty-five centuries before been enacted. So sharply do these two eras confront one another. Arbitrary power, embodied in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, issues its decree of Persecution. Representative government, embodied in the Constituent Assembly, publishes its decree of Toleration. At the one era we see conscience bound ; at the other we behold it loosed.

Let us farther mark the work accomplished by the Revolution. The whole political and ecclesiastical power of the fourth kingdom it spoiled and made utterly waste. Beginning its work of overthrow with the chief kingdom and throne of Europe, it went the round of the papal kingdoms. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts ; after the glory hath He sent me unto the nations that spoiled you." Smitten by a sudden and mysterious stroke, the throne of France lost its prestige, the altar its sanctity, and the law its authority. All classes of the nation, seized with an unaccountable delirium, zealously took part in a movement destined, they believed, to regenerate all things, but in reality fated to destroy all things. The nobles lent it their sanction, and the priests their benediction. The very princes of the blood conspired against the throne. Caught in the social tornado, France bent helplessly as the twig bends before the whirlwind. The work of ages perished in a day. Before this hour arrived, the virtue and loyalty of the kingdom had perished on the scaffold, or had been driven into exile. There re-

mained only the sons of Voltaire, and the adherents of a creed in which its professors had ceased to believe. France had sowed the wind, and now it was to reap the whirlwind. The same ferocious passions which, like so many tigers, had for ages howled around Protestantism, now howled around the throne. When the throne was destroyed, a still deeper howl rose around the Church ; when the Church had ceased to exist, vengeance fell upon the aristocracy : their chateaus perished in the flames, their persons on the scaffold. Last of all, the citizens by thousands were dragged to the guillotine. And now the Revolution, having bowed the head of the burgess beneath the same axe which fell upon the neck of the monarch, took the form of war, and, deeming France too narrow a sphere for its yet unexpended energies, visited other countries, and devastated them with rapine and blood, as it had done the land of its birth.

In this fearful hurricane there was pause, but no termination. The cloud would retreat, and its thunders appear to die away in the distance, and men would begin to reconstruct the edifice of their institutions. But scarce had they begun to build before the storm would return, and scatter in the dust all that had been set up during the deceitful calm. These seventy years has the Revolution sported thus with the hopes and labours of men. The horizon is again darkening afresh. "Howl ye ; for the day of the Lord is at hand ; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart

shall melt : And they shall be afraid : pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them ; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth : they shall be amazed one at another ; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate : and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light : the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity ; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold ; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up : they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land"—(Isaiah, xiii. 6-14).

This hurricane, which prostrated the throne, and ultimately swept away the noblesse, reserved its fiercest blast for the clergy. The Romish Church in France was immensely powerful. Having driven out Protestantism with the sword, she reigned alone, and occupied the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it. A few fugitives in the deserts of the Cevennes could no longer give her any uneasiness. The Church

received tithes to the annual value of fifty millions sterling. Half the lands of France belonged to her. She gave ministers to the Crown, and barons to the communes. By far the most influential and formidable class in the kingdom was the priesthood. But the Revolution fell upon them like an iron hammer. At the beginning of the movement, they had found it expedient to surrender their tithes. The sacrifice was great, but it availed not to save them from still more oppressive exactions. The necessities of the State grew greater every day; the hatred of the Democrats became fiercer every hour; and the National Assembly passed a decree confiscating the whole estates of the clergy, amounting, as some compute, to more than a third, and, according to the reckoning of others, to a half, of the whole landed property of the kingdom.* Not content with making them pensioners of the State, the Assembly next required the priests to abjure allegiance to the Pope, and to take the oath to the civil constitution, under pain of deprivation of their benefices and suspicion of high treason. The cathedrals and chapters were suppressed; all the monastic houses in the kingdom, to the number of four thousand, were abolished. The number of bishops was reduced, and an end put to their feudal prerogatives. These proceedings were crowned by the decree of 1793, which abolished the Church, and proscribed Christianity itself. For three years and a half France worshipped no God:

* Alison's History of Europe, vol. ii. p. 193.

for three years and a half had all open profession of the Truth been suppressed in Papal Europe at a former period, and the dead bodies of the witnesses had lain on the street of the great city : for three years and a half atheism reigned in France, and all kinds of indignities were inflicted upon the professors of Romanism. Many churches were razed : such as were left standing were converted into barns, stables, or factories. The gold and silver vessels of the altar were coined into money ; the bells of the steeples were cast into cannon.* Twenty-four thousand priests perished by massacre or by the guillotine : many fled from the kingdom, and others lived in concealment ; the peasantry in some instances sheltering, and in others betraying them. Only some of these men had personally shared in the persecutions of former years, yet upon this generation came all the righteous blood shed in France since the beginning of the Reformation.

Though this devastating tempest had its first outbreak in France, it was not confined to that country. The soldiers of the Republic carried the principles and the tragedies of the Revolution to other lands. In Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, in Austria, in short, in every Popish State in Europe, the same scenes of mingled horror and retribution were enacted. The ecclesiastical lands were confiscated, cathedrals and abbeys were plundered, and their hoards thrown into the military chest ; their bells, cups, and votive offer-

* Scott's Life of Napoleon, vol. ii. p. 306.

ings were melted down ; the churches were turned into stables, and convents and refectories into barracks ; the images and pictures were defaced and broken ; the rites of the Popish Church were turned into mockery ; the inquisition was razed ; the monastic orders were suppressed ; and the ecclesiastics were maltreated, banished, or massacred on the same instruments of torture on which the confessors of Jesus had been stretched. From these humiliations and calamities the Pope himself had no exemption : he was seized in his palace, carried prisoner, and died in exile. Thus raged the hurricane : terror marched before it : behind it was the blackness of desolation : thrones prostrated, altars broken, hearths desolated, manhood slaughtered : noble cities given to the flames : virtue trampled down like the mire in the streets : the earth bearing on her bosom gory heaps instead of golden harvests : the vine drinking blood, instead of the crystal rivulet that was wont to water it : the hearts of the mighty melting ; their knees smiting one against another : and the whole power, glory, and pride of the papal earth spoiled and laid waste. This day of wrath covered all Europe. As a destruction from the Lord of Hosts, so did it come upon the papal nations.

The Revolution rose out of the past. It was no momentary ripple. This mountainous wave, breaking on the shore of the eighteenth century, had begun to gather as early as the fifth century. The extravagance of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Louis, and the enormous deficit thereby created, was the cause, say some,

that generated the Revolution. It were just as wise to affirm that the great Atlantic may be convulsed into storm by the casting of a pebble into its waves. Society was revolutionized, not because it had been burdened, but because it had been corrupted. This was no financial crisis : it was an outburst of hellish passions. Whence came these passions, and what engendered them ? The whole history of the Revolution may be written in a single sentence. The Church was the foster-mother of the atheism of the eighteenth century ; and that atheism produced the Revolution of 1792. By a natural law, as inevitable as it is wholesome, the noxious vapours that corrupt the air bring in the tempest that purifies it. By a moral law, equally inevitable and salutary, superstition engenders scepticism ; and scepticism brings in the social tornado that sweeps away the superstition. The physical tempest comes from God. From God, too, comes the moral hurricane. In the chariot of the whirlwind He descends to purify the earth, and save it from the universal death which error, if left to grow and spread unchecked, would inevitably inflict. The first pioneers, then, of this terrible Revolution were the priests of Rome, who revolted the intellect by their dogmas, and outraged the conscience by their scandalous lives. "No sooner have we believed in Christ," said Duclos, "than we are asked to believe in the baptism of bells." Next came Voltaire and Rousseau. The priests had taught for Christianity mere fable ; and now Voltaire and Rousseau taught that Christianity was nothing

more than fable. In proof, they pointed to what passed as Christianity in Catholic Europe ; and which, although ministering at the altar, and upheld by princely revenues, was demonstrably a palpable fable, a gross and impudent imposture. Next in the ranks of those who paved the way for the Revolution came the Encyclopædists. These lights of France placed all intelligence in matter, and taught that death is an eternal sleep. Around the Encyclopædia clustered a number of kindred societies, who adopted as their more distinguishing tenets, that all the sufferings of society grew out of the inequality of rank and the unequal division of property. If so, was not the cure very obvious ? If bad opinions were but so many bad pieces of matter, would not the cutting off of so many heads a-day exterminate these opinions ? What harm would be done ? The men who held these opinions would sleep their eternal sleep ; and society, thus purged, would return to its primeval purity. The Revolution had now reached a stage where it must necessarily pass into a great social experiment. Danton and Robespierre stood up, prepared with the dread machinery of revolutionary tribunals and the guillotine, to make the Revolution no longer a principle, but a fact. The Revolution stood embodied before the eyes of France. The beautiful theory of Rousseau was now translated into the guillotine of Robespierre. Those who had worshipped the goddess when veiled in the glittering robes which Voltaire had woven for her, started back with horror when they saw the hideousness of her

naked features. "Liberty," said one, "slept on a mattress of corpses." She demanded all France as a hecatomb. France had to learn that, as in physics, so in morals, the stream cannot rise higher than the fountain. Commencing with a theory that annihilates all virtue, France hoped to rise to happiness. Alas! she but precipitated herself into an abyss of misery. She borrowed the ladder of hell to scale heaven, and fell backwards into pandemonium.

The sayings of some of the actors in these scenes had a prophetic truth, of which those who uttered them were altogether unconscious. One instance of this we have already adduced in the Bishop of Toulouse, who foretold that the last blows which the Bourbon should ever inflict on heresy were drawing nigh, little dreaming that even then the scaffold was preparing for the king of France. Still more striking was the text of the sermon preached by the Abbé Fauchet in Notre Dame, on occasion of blessing the colours of the national guard. The Abbé selected that sublime passage of Isaiah in which the prophet predicts the bringing, as an offering to God, of his long-persecuted people in the latter day. "In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of Hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, the Mount Zion"—(Isaiah, xviii. 7). The words of the prophet, the preacher affirmed, shadowed forth the

Revolution. But he disfigured and travestied the prophecy by applying it to France. "For a long time," said he, "France had waited for justice,—for a long time she had been trodden under foot. But, free at last, she came, first of all, to consecrate to the Lord of Hosts the banners under which her children had fought."* Alas ! France had driven away liberty. For three centuries she had pursued it with edicts and stakes. The people now to be brought as a present to the Lord of Hosts were the people whom France had for ages persecuted. But they were to be brought in a chariot of fire, and by a path of blood. Of this the unconscious prophecy was now uttered beneath the roof of Notre Dame. It said, "the year of my redeemed" is come.

In fine, the unmistakeable likeness of the past, so vividly stamped upon all the horrors of the Revolution, marks it out as an era of retribution. All its tragedies were resurrections. They rose from the prisons and graves of the martyrs, like so many Nemeses. Where did the revolutionists find their models ? Was it not in the annals of persecution ? They searched the massacre of St Bartholomew, that they might re-enact it, in all its horrors, upon the sons of the men who had first contrived it. The drums beat upon the scaffold, the wholesale drownings, the edicts of proscription, were all faithful copies of those which had been framed for the extermination of the Huguenots.

* Bungener's Julian, p. 247.

While we profoundly commiserate the unhappy men on whom these sufferings fell, it becomes us, nevertheless, to mark the justice of God, and the fulfilment of his Word. “Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.” The very spot where the Revolution committed its atrocities was fitted, in instances not a few, to recal the remembrance of past sins. On the Place de Grève was the first martyr of the Reformation burned: on the Place de Grève did the first victim of the Revolution perish. The closing scenes of persecution were brought on by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes; and in the neighbourhood of Nantes were enacted some of the most frightful butcheries of the Revolution. The *Noyades* of Nantes have a melancholy celebrity. We give, as an example, a short extract from Alison:— “No less than eighteen thousand perished in these ways, or by the guillotine, in Nantes alone, during the administration of Carrier; and the mariners, when they heaved their anchors, frequently brought up boats charged with corpses. Birds of prey flocked to the shores, and fed on human flesh; while the very fish became so poisonous, as to induce an order of the municipality of Nantes, prohibiting them to be taken by the fishermen.” “From Saumur to Nantes, a distance of sixty miles, the Loire was for several weeks red with human blood; the ensanguined stream far at sea divided the blue waves of the deep. The multitude of corpses it bore to the ocean was so prodigious, that

the adjacent coast was strewed with them ; and a violent west wind and high tide having brought part of them back to Nantes, followed by a train of sharks and marine animals of prey, attracted by so prodigious an accumulation of human bodies, they were thrown ashore in vast numbers. Fifteen thousand persons perished there under the hands of the executioner, or of diseases in prison, in one month ; the total victims of the Reign of Terror at that place exceeded thirty thousand.”*

Had this tempest assailed France from without, she could have opposed a barrier to it ; but what could human power avail against a vengeance that descended upon her from the skies ? Though the bars of her gates had been of adamant, could they have kept out the judgments of God ? Though her bulwarks had climbed to heaven, and her towers had mounted to the sky, could they have repelled the bolts of the Omnipotent ? Though her armies had been multiplied as the sand of the sea, could they have withstood the chariots of the Most High ? There was no earthly foe which the France of that age would not have dared to meet ; but He who now summoned her to a reckoning was the God of the Huguenots. He looked forth, in this morning watch, upon France, through the pillar of fire, and of the cloud, and troubled her.

He also bowed the heavens and came down,
And there was darkness under his feet.

* History of Europe, vol. iii. pp. 382-384.

He rode upon a cherub and did fly ;
And he soared on the wings of the wind.
He made darkness his covert round about him,—
His pavilion, volumes of waters,—thick clouds of the
skies.
At the brightness before him thick clouds dissolved
Into hailstones and flashes of fire.
And Jehovah thundered in the heavens,
And the Most High sent forth his voice,—
Even hailstones and flashes of fire.
He also sent forth his arrows and scattered them,—
Showers of lightnings and confounded them.
Then the channels of the waters disappeared,—
Then the foundations of the world were discovered,—
At thy rebuke, O Jehovah.*

In their march through the great desert, four thousand years ago, the Israelitish tribes halt beneath the granite precipices of Horeb. Their prophet-leader climbs the hill ; and in that cave's mouth, high in air, he stands with face bowed down to the earth. A cloud descends on the mountain ; an awful Presence passes by ; and a Voice proclaims these four great truths,—cardinal attributes, all of them, in the character of the Supreme,—“ Long-suffering—visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children—keeping mercy to thousands—that will by no means clear the guilty.” Here is the Statute-book of the great Ruler opened. These are the four pillars that support the throne on which sits the great Judge, dispensing justice to the nations. This is the key to all history since. Read aright, the long drama of the history of

* New Translation, &c. of the Book of Psalms, by Benjamin Weiss. P. 412.

Europe is just the re-proclamation of those four great principles first announced amid the solitudes of Horeb,—Long-suffering,—visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children—keeping mercy to thousands—that will by no means clear the guilty.

LONG-SUFFERING. For upwards of twelve hundred years did God wait for the papal nations. Silent, throughout the long centuries, sat the great Judge in the heavens. Power waxed fat, climbed up to thrones, and revelled in oppression. Truth was overborne and trampled down, and had to flee to the dens and caves of the earth. But the period of waiting came at length to an end ; and then the European nations were sisted at the bar of the great Judge.

VISITING THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN. How few of the men on whom the storm of 1792 burst had had any personal share in the persecution of the Protestants ! The scaffolds, *noyades*, and bloody battle-fields of the Revolution were the punishment of crimes which had been committed ages before. The perpetrators of these crimes went to sleep in marble, leaving it to their sons to expiate their tyrannies and hypocrisies under the axe of the guillotine. Thus, before our very eyes, is God visiting on the sons the iniquities of the fathers. Yet in this the Judge of all the earth does right ; for these sons, by a continuance in their fathers' idolatries, have served themselves heirs to their fathers' sins.

KEEPING MERCY TO THOUSANDS. The visible distinction betwixt Protestant and Popish nations since

the outbreak of the French Revolution, and especially the proud career of Britain, which has grown out of the happy choice made at the Reformation, sufficiently illustrate this principle. The future, in all probability, is destined to yield still larger and more magnificent illustrations of it.

THAT WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY. How inflexible is the Divine justice, all the papal nations have had ample opportunity of testing since the era of the Reformation. Not one of them has been able to recal the choice it then made, or to avert the terrible consequences of that choice. But the guiltiest of them all is France. She sinned against greater light than Italy, or Spain, or Austria. She was at the very gates of Protestantism,—she may be said to have entered in,—when the apostacy of Henry IV. turned her back, and placed her irrevocably on the side of Rome.* She has sealed her apostacy by persecutions more cruel and bloody than those of any other papal power. On France, therefore, first of all, did vengeance fall; and through France, as the door, did vengeance overtake the

* “Clement VII. lost England,” observed Seraphino one day, “by excommunicating Henry VIII. Clement VIII. saved France by absolving Henry IV.” The pontiff himself fully comprehended the gravity of the crisis. “My brethren,” said Clement VIII. to the consistory assembled in the Quirinal, August 2, 1595, to deliberate on the petition of Henry IV., praying to be received into communion with the Church of Rome,—“My brethren, your verdict will decide the fate of the realm of France rather than the private case of the king, who has submitted to the Church.”—*Henry IV. and Marie de Medici.* By M. W. Freer. Vol. i. p. 120.

rest. The liberty France parted with when she forsook the Reformation, prayers, tears, and blood have been ineffectual to buy back. And so of all the papal nations. Ever as they lift up their heads, and promise to themselves an era of liberty and prosperity, there comes another stroke that lays them prostrate in the dust. *He will by no means clear the guilty.*

Of this truth, and with special reference to this epoch, what a striking scenic representation has our Lord given in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. This, his closing parable, presents two pictures. In the remote background of the vision is seen the last judgment ; but in the foreground is placed the judgment of the Papal and Protestant nations at the close of the "Seven Times." The parable follows that of the "Ten Virgins," in which our Lord foreshows his sudden coming at midnight, when, as we have already shown, the darkness of a semi-infidelity covered the whole of Christendom : faith was not on the earth ; and the Protestant equally with the Popish Churches were sleeping a deep sleep. The five Protestant Churches,—Scotland, England, Geneva, Prussia, Holland,—arose and trimmed their lamps, in the way of reforms within and evangelistic enterprises without. The five Popish Churches,—France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Austria,—found that they could not trim theirs ; for with them the truth was totally lost. The former, accordingly, enter with the bridegroom into the marriage ; the latter are shut out in outer darkness. At this point the form of the vision changes, and the scene

becomes judicial and solemn. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory." Let us mark that it is the coming of "the Son of Man" of which Christ here speaks, with evident reference to Daniel's prophecy: it is nations He summons to his tribunal; it is nations He separates and places on the right and on the left; and that separation turns on the treatment these nations had respectively given to the Reformation. They who had welcomed it when it came as a stranger to their shores, who had given asylum and bread to its poor persecuted followers, and had not been ashamed to own it in prison, pass to the right. They who had driven it away, pursued it with famine and sword, or thrown it into prison, are ranged on the left. We hear France begin to say, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" Then shall the King answer and say unto them,— When ye drove the Huguenots in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, in crowds from your kingdom, ye did it unto me: when ye made France swim with blood on Bartholomew eve, ye did it unto me: when ye filled your prisons with victims, and crowded your scaffolds with martyrs, I lay in prison, I stood on the scaffold. Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OPENING OF THE TEMPLE TO THE NATIONS.

WE have come from contemplating the descent of the Judge and the opening of the judgment-day. We have beheld the political heavens rolled together as a scroll at his coming. In the same hour in which the old heavens and the old earth are seen in the prophetic drama to pass away, the new heavens and the new earth are seen to arise. A scene of terror unspeakably awful is united and blended with a scene of glory unspeakably sublime. Scarce has the thick gloom consequent on the extinction of the lights of the old firmament begun to gather, till we are cheered by the bursting glory of the morning stars of the new creation. Above the crash of thrones, and the weeping of those who cry alas ! alas ! we hear the sons of God shouting for joy.

When we turn to the era in question,—the era, namely, that opened in Europe at the moment the three great prophetic lines had converged,—it is sufficiently striking to observe that, in harmony with the prophecy, it bears a double character. At the same moment two sets of forces spring into action, essentially

and radically antagonistic, and yet both conspiring harmoniously towards the attainment of the same great end. Along with the process of overthrow there is found to be proceeding, *pari passu*, a process of reconstruction. Amid the noise, distraction, and terror of the falling edifice, there is seen to rise, in sublime silence and majestic strength,—vast, beautiful, and glorious as the firmament itself,—a spiritual building that will stand for ever. If 1789 inaugurated the most destructive movement the world has ever seen, it also inaugurated the mightiest reformative movement which any age has witnessed. Contemporaneously with the era of revolutions in the world came an era of spiritual awakening and evangelistic enterprise in the Church. One would scarce have thought that movements so unlike were equally mated when yoked together; and yet He who is “wonderful in counsel and excellent in working” sent both the same hour into the world.

Let us open the Apocalypse at the eleventh chapter and fifteenth verse. We read,—“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.” This verse puts us down at the threshold of the great judgment-day. It synchronises, in point of time, with the seventh chapter of Daniel and ninth verse,—“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit.” Up to this point the apocalyptic history is occupied

with the rise and reign of the beast. But here begins the account of his downfall. The sudden shifting of the scene is notified by the sounding of the seventh angel. Intimation had already been given that the seventh trumpet would sound the knell of the world-power, and introduce those mighty judgments which were to signalize the "Time of the End." The rainbow-clothed angel whom John saw standing upon "the sea and the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to his servants the prophets." That angel is now heard to sound; and mark what a blessed change passes upon the world. "There were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." These had been the kingdoms of the beast hitherto. They had been the very kingdoms that carried the harlot: now they subordinate their power, influence, and authority to Christ. How manifest is it that their "Seven Times" have run out, and that their subordination to the beast is at an end! When Nebuchadnezzar, who herein, as we have already shown, was their prototype, had come to the end of his "Seven Times," his reason returned, and, lifting his eyes to heaven, he knew that the heavens did rule. In like manner, the term of the madness of these kingdoms,—for what is idolatry and despotism but a political and moral madness?—has now run out: their

reason returns : they lift their eyes to heaven, and render practical homage to Him whom God has set on the right hand of power in the heavens. Not that this change is consummated in a day. It begins at the "time of the end," when Satan is cast out ; and it runs on till the "end," when Christ's reign is universally acknowledged and everywhere submitted to.

In the verses that follow to the close of the chapter we have all the characteristics of the judgment-day gathered in a group. First the twenty-four elders fall down before God, and give thanks that He has now taken to Him his great power, and hast reigned. The beast is no longer regnant. Since the fall of the theocracy, God's power had been, as it were, in abeyance. During the epoch of the four kingdoms, the Lord said, "I will take my rest, and I will consider in my dwelling-place, like a clear heat upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." Now the period of waiting was ended, and God resumes his reign. "And the nations were angry." It was the beast who had been angry before : now the nations rage. The madness of despotism had its re-action in the madness of anarchy. Wrongs never redressed avenged themselves in the fury of revolution. "And thy wrath is come," —the great day of wrath, so long foretold ; "and the time of the dead,"—the time foreshadowed by Daniel, when many should awake, "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt ;" that they should be judged, and that "thou shouldst give reward to thy servants the prophets,"—the Old Testa-

ment saints,—“and to the saints,” the New Testament martyrs,—the reckoning will go back to the beginning of the “Seven Times;” and “that thou shouldst destroy them who destroy the earth,”—a description equally compendious and just of a system that produces moral, political, and physical ruin. Having destroyed other things, it is itself to be destroyed. Let us mark the symbol wherewith the chapter closes. Amid lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, the gates of the temple are seen to open, and the “ark of his testament” is discovered in the Holy of Holies. How evident is it that the veil is rending, and that through means of the missionary enterprise the truths of the Bible are beginning to be unveiled to the papal and heathen nations! This harmonizes with the fifteenth verse, which speaks of the kingdoms as transferring their power from the beast to their rightful prince Messiah. Plain it is that the world is to become at this era the theatre of a double movement,—the one destructive, the other regenerative, and achieving, when acting in combination, an end unspeakably sublime, which neither, acting singly, could have accomplished.

When we turn to the end of the last century, we have no difficulty in tracing these two movements. They authenticate their presence by the vast changes which we see them effecting on society. We see armies, thrones, laws,—all that man deemed most stable,—crumbling at their approach; and behind them we behold a new order of things, of which the world

had not dreamed, springing up. These two movements are **REVOLUTION** and **MISSIONS**.

Like all great movements, they were prepared in silence. They progressed unseen and unsuspected by man till the hour of their sudden revelation came. They took the world by surprise only because it was ignorant of the preparation which had been making for both in secret. "Amazing," the world exclaims, when such movements came suddenly into view, "that all this should have happened in a day!" forgetting that what appears to be the work of a day is in reality the labour of centuries. The world eats and drinks as it did before the flood, and says, "since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were,"—little dreaming that beneath the surface on which it treads so securely, and which it deems so stable, innumerable forces are in intense and ceaseless activity. The influence which heaps up the tides upon the shore begins in the depths of ocean. The power which in spring creates an instantaneous burst of verdure and beauty over a thousand plains and mountains, has its first scarce perceptible movement in the depths of the earth. Those revolutionary and reformatory movements which were contemporaneously revealed in the end of last century had been silently operating in the bosom of society ever since the Reformation. Ages of misgovernment, which bestowed no immunities, conceded no rights, initiated no useful institutions, which sternly resisted and cruelly suppressed every aspiration after liberty, and which did literally nothing to prepare men

for the enjoyment of it, issued at last in an open, general, and total revolt of the people of the papal earth from their rulers. Prior to the Reformation, one age of despotism succeeded another in a calm unbroken series. Men then were about as uninstructed and unreflecting as the beasts of the earth ; and one would as soon have looked for insurrection among the serfs that then peopled Europe, as he would have looked for insurrection among the oxen of the field. But the Reformation came, imparting knowledge and quickening mind. In the dawn that broke over Europe, men saw that they had rights. Thus a great onward movement was commenced ; and where that movement was hindered from becoming reformatory by the peaceful amelioration of political and religious institutions, it became revolutionary, and began steadily to progress towards the overthrow of those institutions it was forbidden to reform. The natural and logical sequel we have already seen. First came atheism, next came the guillotine, and lastly came the armies of Napoleon, which generalized the Revolution, and gave to Europe a normal state of things, oscillating perpetually betwixt anarchy and despotism.

We turn to the other movement. Of the two, it is the more silent, but the more irresistible. Instead of being destined to explode, like the Revolution, in fire and blood, and to expire in darkness, it is destined to wax continually in brightness, till, like a glorious noon, it shall fill the earth with holy light. It is sufficiently striking that missions date from the era of the Revo-

lution. The apostles of Atheism and the apostles of the Cross came forth the same hour into the world. Thus, amid thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquake, we behold the Temple opened, and the gospel unveiled to the nations. We recognise, too, in this, another sure sign that the "Seven Times" had now run out. At the beginning of the epoch the stars are seen to set : prophet follows prophet to the tomb, and silence and darkness reign upon the earth : now the stars again come forth : one burning and shining light after another mounts into the horizon ; and the silence begins to be broken by the voice of preachers proclaiming the Cross in both the papal and the heathen worlds.

It was in the end of last century that the evangelical movements in Britain, which have since developed into proportions so noble, and filled the earth with fruits so precious, had their initiative. Both in Scotland and in England there arose a little band of champions who led these movements. Endowed with a rare courage, a commanding eloquence, and a burning zeal, they went forth, amid the sneers of infidelity, the frowns of men in power, and the indifference of a godless age, to preach a forgotten gospel to the world. When Rousseau and Voltaire were blazing in the zenith of their fame, and France was worshipping at their feet, Dr Erskine within the Establishment, and the two Erskines outside the Establishment, in Scotland, Wesley and Whitefield in England, and, at a somewhat later period, Simeon, and Scott, and Wilberforce, were

raising from the dust the standard of the cross. Thus the Encyclopædists of France and the evangelists of Britain laid contemporaneously the foundation, in their respective countries, of these two movements. The one sowed the wind of atheism, to reap the whirlwind of revolution : the other planted those principles which, through the missionary enterprise, were destined to give the world order and liberty. Neither party could foresee the extent and importance of the movements thus originated,—that these movements, thus feebly launched, should gather volume and power as they rolled on, and reach their goal only when they had changed the condition of the world. Nor did any very striking effects follow the labours of these men at first. Half a century passed away, and then came the outburst. It was the volcanic explosion in the one case, shaking the kingdoms, and scattering ruin and death over nations. The other rose upon the world in silent power and beauty, like the opening of the day. France became the land of revolutions, Britain the land of missions. In 1786, when the quarrels between the king and the Parliament were beginning in France, the Wesleyan body, which was earliest in the field, was instituting its mission to Nova Scotia. In 1792, when Louis XVI. was expiring on the scaffold, the first missionaries of the Baptist Society were on their way out to India ; and in 1796, when Napoleon had crossed the Alps, and was laying the foundations of his short-lived power in his Italian campaigns, the London and Scotch Societies had been formed, and their agents

were crossing the ocean to lay the foundations of a more lasting empire at the other side of the globe.

What profound wisdom in joining together these two movements ! The revolutionary movement alone would have destroyed the world ; the missionary movement alone would have failed to benefit it : it is the union of the two that accomplishes the end. The destructive agencies are the pioneers of the regenerative ones. Without the "whirlwind," and the "earthquake," and the "fire," how could a path be opened for the light ? All nations must be shaken ; for in every country idolatry has had the art to entwine itself around the civil polity. The whirlwind will level not only the idol's temple, but likewise the political power that has upheld it. And of late years we have witnessed a vast extension of the revolutionary movement ; and, as the consequence, the despotic constitutions and immemorial superstitions of Asia, of India, and of China, are beginning to totter and fall. The world to its farthest limit is uneasy and troubled ; and men of every nation are impressed with the belief that changes of unusual magnitude are at hand.

It is but the hour of dawn to the world. That dawn breaks, it is true, amid clouds and tempests,—amid the shakings of all nations ; but prophecy foretold that so should break that dawn which is to usher in the millennial glory. Let not these portents dismay us : they are sent, not to destroy the Church, but to shake the world, that the gospel may come in, with its tranquil but omnipotent power, to renew it. We

feel, in contemplating these changes, like one who stands upon an alp at daybreak. Far and wide around him lies the night ; but mountain peak after mountain peak rises out of the darkness, and begins to glow with the radiance of the not yet risen sun. The east brightens apace ; the serene light mounts higher into the firmament ; the gloom sinks lower on the mountain's side. A few moments more, and the plains and valleys of earth will be seen bathed in the splendours of day. It is as yet but the mountain peaks of the heathen world that have emerged from the darkness. The great plains to this hour are buried beneath the pagan night ; but these luminous points rapidly multiply ; and each, as it starts out of the darkness, becomes a herald of the day. The gates of the future seem to open before us, and our eyes are gladdened with the ravishing picture—at no distant day to be a reality—of despotism's throne overturned, superstition's dungeon razed, war's red sword broken, and the liberated and ransomed nations dwelling tranquilly together, knit by love into a family of brothers, and consecrated by piety into a congregation of worshippers.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST VIAL.

WE come now to contemplate the great Judgment-day, in its successive scenes of awful yet holy retribution. We open the fifteenth chapter of the Apocalypse. We find ourselves in presence of the same symbol which closed the narrative of the eleventh chapter,—the temple of God in heaven, to wit,—showing that all between is a parenthesis, and that the history of the eleventh chapter is resumed in the fifteenth. The portals of the Temple are still open ; but the temple itself is filled with the smoke of Divine judgment, so that the nations have not been able to enter it ; teaching us that, “ till the seven plagues of the seven angels are fulfilled,” we need expect no conversions to the gospel on any great scale in the papal world. The seven angels, whose work it is to pour out the vials, are seen to issue, habited in white, and girded with golden girdles, from the Temple. At sight of them, the company who have gotten the victory* over the beast,

* “ *Nικωντας εκ του θηριου και εκ της εικονος αυτου, και εκ του αριθμου του ονοματος αυτου*”—(Apoc. xv. 2)—literally, “ conquering out of the beast, and out of his image, and out of the number of

and who stand on the sea of glass, take their harps, and sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. This song is in anticipation of the work to be accomplished by the seven angels. The vials contain the "last plagues;" for "in them is filled up," or finished, "the wrath of God." Their effusion, therefore, will consummate the indignation, sweep the anti-Christian confederacy from the earth, remove the curse, open heaven for the descent of the Spirit, and bring in that blessed era of rest and peace for which the Church and the world have so long waited. Most meet, therefore, it is that this song, whose first notes were heard on the shores of the Red Sea, should be taken up by the company on the sea of glass, and sung in strains more triumphant, now that the great exodus has been accomplished. Then it was but the song of Moses: it was incomplete because the deliverance was incomplete. That deliverance looked forward to a greater deliverance under Christ. Now the song is complete, inasmuch as the deliverance is finished: it is therefore the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.

But mainly is it termed the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb because it has respect to both Tes-

his name." This phrase is certainly unusual; a mere Greek scholar might deem it not a little inelegant; yet we venture to affirm that, when respect is had to the thing expressed, it will be seen to be beautifully accurate and strikingly descriptive. It refers to Protestants, whom it exhibits as emerging from the jurisdiction of Rome and the influence of her superstition.

taments, the Old and the New. The Egypt out of which the Church is now marching was one in which both Churches had endured bondage. The "Seven Times" reached back to the era of the Old Testament saints. Accordingly, when the Seventh Trumpet sounds, it is intimated that now God will give reward unto his servants the *prophets*, and to the *saints*. On the shore of this deliverance, then, both Churches are seen to stand: in this song of triumph both Churches are heard singing,—the prophets of the Old Testament, the saints of the New; and to teach us how all-embracing this deliverance is, and that both Churches have an equal interest in it, the song in which it is celebrated is termed the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. This song may be regarded as proceeding all the while that the vials are being poured out. Its melody blends with the thunder of judgment. While the men who have the mark of the beast, and who worship his image, are blaspheming God "because of their pains and their sores," the company on the sea of glass, "that had gotten the victory," are praising him. The mightiest burst of this song ascends only after the last vial has been poured out. A great voice "of much people" is heard saying, alleluia, "for true and righteous are thy judgments; and "again they said, alleluia;" while prophets and apostles answer back, and swell the shouts of earth with the rejoicings of heaven.

A great voice from the Temple addresses the seven angels, bidding them go their ways, and pour out the

vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. They go at the command. These seven vials are just so many dispensations of judgment which are sent upon the papal earth, and which constitute the great judgment-day.

Let us premise, that the symbol that rules this epoch is exceedingly appropriate. That symbol is the **VIAL**. If those judged right who placed the *Apocalypse* in the canon of *Scripture* as an inspired book, it must agree in its great and leading epochs with the great outstanding events in modern history. The first glance at the history of the world, as comprised in the Christian era, shows us that it arranges itself into three great divisions or periods ; first, the decline of Pagan Rome ; second, the rise of the Gothic nations in partnership with the Papacy ; third, the fall of these nations in the breaking up of their ecclesiastical and civil polity, commencing with the French Revolution. These are the three grand divisions which any historian would naturally make were he writing a concise account of the past eighteen hundred years. He would arrange his subject into the Roman period, the Gothic period, and the Revolutionary period.

Now, the *Apocalypse* is arranged into three such epochs. Its drama has three, and only three, grand stages ; and each of these stages has its special and appropriate symbol. The symbol of the first, or Roman period, is the **SEAL**. Under the *seals* the imagery is Roman, and the very language of the actors is Roman. The symbol of the second, or Gothic period,

is the TRUMPET,—betokening that the plagues of that period were to come from without. The *seals* implied that the judgments to happen under them were to be of native growth ; they were to arise on the spot, and to come into view simply on the opening of the seal. But the *trumpets* were to summon judgments from afar,—from beyond the confines of the empire.

Equally descriptive of the character of its era is the third symbol,—the VIAL. The *vial* suggests the idea of judgment growing out of previous sinning ; and, it may be, a long course of sinning. The cup, before it can be poured out, must be filled,—filled with the deeds of the criminal, with the wrath of the Judge. The collateral symbols, too, which are employed to represent this epoch, countenance this view. The period which is first of all covered by the symbol of the Vial is afterwards parted betwixt the two subordinate symbols,—the *Harvest* and the *Vintage*. Both carry back the mind to a previous sowing and planting, and to a previous process of ripening ; and both connect present effects with bygone causes. Both depict the epoch as a closing one to kingdoms and Churches.

We have further to premise, that these five vials constitute the third woe. The first and second woes fell upon the Eastern Church. By these woes was that Church exterminated, and the region once filled with her light was now filled with the barbarism and idolatry of Mohammed. The third woe was reserved for the Roman Church ; and that woe is the Revolu-

tion. The three woes are each mentioned as one. This warrants us in thinking that each would possess a homogeneity of character,—one cup, but containing many bitter ingredients. Such was the first woe,—the Saracens: such was the second woe,—the Turks. And this countenances the idea that the third woe is the Revolution; because, though opening out into many dark scenes of horror and crime, it is, nevertheless, in its origin and character but one dispensation. The Revolution, from its rise in 1789 to the present hour, is undeniably one: it is always spoken of as one; and therefore, though it was to darken the years of well-nigh a whole century, and to roll its destructive thunders over the whole of Papal Europe, it was fittingly foretold as but one woe.

It was to come with terrible speed. “The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly,”—is the intimation given in chapter eleventh, immediately before the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. Expositors have found a formidable difficulty in these words. They have understood them as if they intimated that the interval betwixt the second and the third woes,—the cessation of the Turkish plague and the outbreak of the Revolution,—would be short. They have read the words as if their warning ran thus:—“You have just emerged from the second woe: a third and greater is hurrying on apace: already its rising shadow darkens the earth: in a little it will burst.” With this interpretation, however, has not agreed the event. The interval betwixt the two woes*

has been of considerable length. But, happily, there is no need to strain either the words or the fact. The term "quickly" has reference, we are satisfied, to the rapidity of the approach of the third woe. It intimates that when it should come, it would come so quickly as to amaze and confound the world. It is the same word which is employed to announce our Lord's second coming. "Surely I come quickly." We are not to understand that but a few years will intervene betwixt his farewell on the summit of Mount Olivet, and the archangel's trumpet proclaiming his return; but that when He does return He will come unexpectedly: He will come as the thief comes when he surprises the householder at midnight: He will come as the lightning comes when it darts its sudden fires from the bosom of the cloud. So was the third woe to come.

This interpretation is in harmony with all that is foretold of the final overthrow of Satan's kingdom. Prophecy represents that overthrow as sudden in its approach and rapid in its consummation. "A short work will the Lord do in all the earth." "If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me." There is a time when that sword seems to delay,—when it rusts in the scabbard of God's long-suffering; there is a time when His hands are so filled with mercy, that judgment cannot be grasped in them; but if He "whet his glittering sword," and his hand "take hold on judgment," then the slackness of the justice will be recompensed.

by the weight of the blow. "Justice," said one, "moves with a foot of wool, but strikes with a hand of iron." When God comes, He comes indeed ; He comes in the clouds ; He comes in the chariot of the whirlwind ; He comes to begin and to make an end. France had reached her palmiest grandeur, and the papal world was enjoying profoundest peace, when the third woe, suddenly descending, wrapt them in storm and darkness.

The great voice has spoken ; and scarce have its echoes ceased till the first vial strikes the earth. "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth ; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men who had the mark of the beast, and upon them who worshipped his image." Bengel points to the significant omission of the word "angel" in the phrase "the first went." He regards it as denoting the utmost despatch in the work of pouring out the vials, "of which," says he, "this also is a token that there is no period of time mentioned in the pouring out of each vial."*

Let us avail ourselves of the light shed upon the vial by its type. The first Egypt, we have already shown, was a vivid foreshadowing of the second. In it were done the very crimes which the second was to commit, and over it passed the very judgments that were to desolate the other. The plagues of the first Exodus, therefore, being specially set forth as types, may be

* J. A. Bengelii *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, p. 726. Berolini, 1855.

expected to afford great insight into the vials. They corroborate by their analogy, and illustrate by their variety of external aspect, the true meaning of the seven last plagues.

When at length judgment touched the persons of the Egyptians, it took the form of "a boil breaking forth with blains." The sign that heralded the plague was significant. It pointed most emphatically to the sin it was sent to avenge. Moses, by the Divine command, went to the furnace or brick kiln, took an handful of ashes, and, in the sight of Pharaoh, sprinkled it toward heaven. On the instant a thin cloud covered the sky, a fine dust thickened the air, and, lighting on the bodies of the Egyptians, an ulcer, noisome, grievous, and deadly, covered their persons. Thus was Pharaoh taught the connection between the oppression of his captives and the plagues of his kingdom. The furnace which had been kindled for the Israelites now scorched himself, his sorcerers, and his subjects.

The same thing is done over again in the second Egypt,—Papal Europe. Judgment first smites the men of the papal earth, and them only, with "a noisome and grievous sore."* It was a literal ulcer in the case of the first Egypt: it is a moral ulcer in the case of the second Egypt. Everywhere in Scripture an ulcer or sore is put to signify a morally diseased state of the individual or of the community. It uniformly denotes some affection corrupt in its principles, vicious

* "Ελκος κακον και πονηρον."

in its manifestations, and destructive in its tendencies. We give but one illustration. When the prophet would paint the utterly corrupt state of his nation, and the thorough social disorganization consequent thereon, he does it by this very metaphor,—“ From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it ; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores”—(Isa. i. 6). What was this “ noisome and grievous sore” that now broke out upon the men of the papal earth ? The history of the period leaves it noways doubtful. It was ATHEISM, which, like a hideous blotch, covered France, and with infectious virulence spread to the rest of the papal earth. As vicious humours taint the blood, poison the body, and break out in unsightly and ulcerous sores upon the skin, so the sceptical principles received into the ecclesiastical and political constitutions of the papal nations continued silently to operate, till at last they undermined conscience, destroyed belief, and finally vented themselves in blasphemous opinions, in detestable practices, and in revolutionary theories, which pulled down in blood the edifice of society upon the heads of their propagators. With what prodigious talent and unwearied zeal these tenets had been diffused in France during the half-century preceding the Revolution, we have already shown. All classes of the nation were corrupted ; and vice unequalled in any former age in filthy grossness and shameless audacity broke in like a deluge upon France. The evil culminated—crime unprecedented from the foundation of the world!—in

a national profession of atheism. Individual atheists there had been in former ages ; but now, for the first time, there was beheld the astounding phenomenon of a nation of atheists.

Let us farther mark, that this atheism was just the logical and inevitable issue of the madness under which the nations had been labouring all throughout the “Seven Times” which had gone before. Insanity, if not cured, results at last in downright idiotcy,—in a total eclipse of reason. The insanity of the world-power had now reached its natural terminating point. Even the brilliant hallucinations of Greece and Rome no longer flickered before men : France had plunged into a deeper abyss. She sat in rayless, hopeless darkness. It was the night of idiotic atheism over the papal world. Now, indeed, was the fall consummated. Man in paradise, aspiring to be wise as God, listened to a beast : and now for ages he had been ruled by a beast ; he had adopted the creed of a beast ; and the highest achievement of his boasted philosophy was to teach him that he should die as a beast ; or, as the wise king expressed it for him, “a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast.”

The first vial was poured out, not when the principles of atheism began to work, but when they came to an open outbreak, and, from being individual speculations and beliefs, became maxims of national polity. So long as they were confined to individuals, these principles might taint and destroy those who entertained them ; but not till they were adopted by the

body corporate, and passed into action in the way of regulating its public policy, could they become the subject of symbolic figuration. It is nations only that are seen in the Apocalypse.

This plague, like its prototype, rose out of the ashes of the furnace. That furnace had been kept blazing in France for three whole centuries. The piety, virtue, and patriotism of the nation had been cast into it, and had perished amid its fires. Conscience had been destroyed, belief had been overthrown, and now nothing remained but the ashes of an envenomed scepticism. Of these ashes, a handful was taken and sprinkled towards heaven. On the instant the sky of France grew dark with atheism ; its air became thick with vice ; embittered and sanguinary theories began to torment the minds, and vile and abominable practices to pollute the lives, of its people ; and, acting on the old doctrine, but changing its application, the axe which in a former age had been set up to exterminate religious heresy, was now set up to exterminate political heresy ; and thus, with whirlwind speed, her appointed woes rushed upon France.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SECOND VIAL : OR, THE SEA OF BLOOD.

THERE is a cosmical order, and there is a logical sequence, in the Vials. Attention to this arrangement will help to prevent our straying from the even path of sound and consistent interpretation. Their cosmical order limits the vials to one system, on which they all fall. Their logical sequence links all of them together, as cause and effect, from the first onward to the last. Vial grows out of vial ; so that they are beheld, not as isolated judgments, but as one comprehensive dispensation of wrath.

Let us attend first to their cosmical order. They are not dispersed, but concentrated,—concentrated upon one system, here presented under the symbol of a world. That world has its earth, its sea, its rivers, its sun, its air ; in short, it is complete in all its parts. Over this world, with the glory of which Satan had often tempted his servants to do him homage, there now hangs a tempest of fire ; and the successive bursts of that awful tempest, beginning at the foundations, proceed upwards, till the whole of the symbolic edifice is wrapt in ruin.

The first vial falls upon its earth, the fourth darkens its sun, the fifth eclipses the seat of its supreme ruler, and the seventh is poured into its air, and so becomes the consummating plague. For, just as our globe would be irretrievably and totally destroyed were a colossal vial of fire to be emptied into its atmosphere, and a blazing furnace enkindled all round it, so this symbolic world, smitten piecemeal by the first six vials, is smitten all over by the seventh. Its atmosphere, enkindled by the last vial, becomes an all-encompassing and all-devouring furnace.

The symbolic world here beheld is the papal system in its conjoined political and ecclesiastical organizations. Within this symbolic world, or in systems in some way bound up with it, must be found the scene of all of these seven vials. The first vial finds that world flourishing, its thrones standing, its laws in full vigour, its maxims, destructive of individual virtue and the prosperity of nations, extolled as the wisdom of ages, and everywhere obeyed ; its idolatrous worship celebrated with pomp, its hierarchies gorged with wealth and swollen with pride, but liberty in chains, the gospel proscribed, and its confessors slain. So is it beheld on the immediate eve of the outpouring of the first vial ; but from that moment how rapid and portentous the change ! As vial follows vial, it sinks by swift stages, till what at the beginning was a scene of power stable and dazzling, vanishes irresistibly, and leaves behind it scarce a wreck of its perished splendour. The pagan earth and heavens that were at the begin-

ning of Christianity were overflowed by the waters of the Gothic deluge. The papal earth and heavens that now are, are kept in store, reserved for the fires of the seventh vial.

“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead man ; and every living soul died in the sea”—(Rev. xvi. 3). The first vial is poured upon the earth ; the second upon the sea. It is the same world, only viewed under a different aspect. The “earth,” as opposed to “sea,” is the symbol of stability ; while “sea” is the symbol of agitation and revolution. France, when the first vial smote it, was in a state of outward tranquillity ; but now, how changed ! Atheism had let loose the winds of anarchy, and France had begun to heave and swell, and its great billows to lift up their voice, and roar around the bulwarks of the State, as do the waves of ocean when the winds of heaven strive upon its surface. This vial was the Revolution. It was consummated between the years 1793 and 1796.

This vial, too, had its type among the plagues of Egypt. The first of the ten plagues was the turning of the Nile—the sea of Egypt—into blood. In the Nile had Pharaoh drowned the first-born of the Hebrews, and now the Nile rolled through his land a river of blood,—memento ghastly and terrific of the blood he had shed. France was the Nile, or sea, of the papal world. It was the first in dignity and importance among the kingdoms subject to the pontifical see. Its wealth replenished the coffers, and its power upheld

the state, of the popedom. Its monarch was the eldest son of the Church, the champion of the faith, the destroyer of heresy. But now this modern Nile, like its Egyptian prototype, rolled through the midst of the papal earth a river of blood. "It became blood, as of a dead man."*

Let us here trace the logical sequence betwixt the two vials. The first vial discloses the root—atheism, to wit—out of which the whole series of woes sprang. The judgment took its rise in the scepticism of the individual men: individual scepticism speedily passed into national atheism: then was seen the first vial. Atheism inevitably developed into a political phase, and that phase was revolution: then was seen the second vial. We say it *inevitably* developed into revolution. The belief of a God was no more. With the belief of a God perished the authority of conscience. That mighty though invisible power which does a hundred times more to maintain the order of the world than all the kings, judges, tribunals, and executioners in it, was now extinct. With conscience fell the restraints of law; the cement of society was annihilated; neither fear nor force remained to control men; every passion was unchained; order was utterly destroyed; and now the guillotine stood up. One awful power—the AXE—was suspended over France. Beneath that axe fell, in a period of time incredibly short, a million of heads. France was a

* J. A. Bengelii *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, p. 727.

raging sea, but that sea was red,—it was reddened with an immense slaughter.

The phrase is peculiar, yet strikingly descriptive of the strange and awful state of France. “It became blood, as of a dead man,”—“thick, congealed, and putrid,” says Bengel. This may have respect to the moral condition of France, which was corrupt to the very core; but it also refers to the most anomalous political state of France. All its functions as a nation were paralyzed: utter disorganization, social death, overtook it. Burke called it “a rotten carcase.” The ordinary motives, pursuits, enjoyments, of its citizens, were suspended. One terrible idea was continually before their minds; one awful presence hovered day and night over them—DEATH. “The history of the world,” says Alison, speaking of the Reign of Terror, “has no parallel to that long, long night of suffering.”* A revolutionary tribunal sat in every town; a thousand guillotines rose throughout the country; fifteen hundred bastilles were insufficient to contain the prisoners; and chateaus, abbeys, and convents were converted into jails; noble cities were overturned, and their wretched inhabitants, formed into groupes, were led into the market-place, and mowed down with cannon; the rivers ran with blood; the refluent tides washed up corpses like sea-weed upon the shore; agriculture, commerce, the arts, stood still. This was not life: it was a waking death. And yet how short a

* Alison’s History of Europe, vol. iv. p. 203.

way do these terrible details show us into the inner grief of the nation ! The terror, agony, despair, of each of these million victims, and of the millions more, their friends and survivors, who shall paint ? Sir James Mackintosh calls it "the only series of crimes perhaps in history which, in spite of the common disposition to exaggerate extraordinary facts, has been beyond measure *underrated* in public opinion." *

This second vial is a grand execution. In its attendant circumstances, nothing is wanting to give it an awful sublimity, and to attract to it the attention of a world. The scaffold is set up in the most conspicuous kingdom of Europe ; the criminal is the nation of France ; and with all solemnity does the execution proceed. The lights of the political firmament are veiled ; the heavens are robed in blackness ; all contemporary nations, and all following ones to whom history shall hand down the record of the unexampled event, are invited to become the witnesses. Before their eyes the procession moves on to the scaffold. The king ascends it first, the priesthood next, the nobles next, the burgesses next : no one is exempt because he is dignified by rank or resplendent by talent : no one is exempt because he is obscure : all pass on to that terrible scaffold, and all bow the head beneath that inexorable axe. Never before had the world witnessed a spectacle like this. A hundred and a hundred times had it seen the miseries of famine, of

* Mackintosh's Works, vol. iii. p. 295.

plague, of war, accumulated upon nations; but this was judgment in a form that was new, and with terrors hitherto unknown. This was the great day of wrath.

We must farther mark, that this was a nation offering up itself. No power without compelled France to inflict this frightful vengeance upon herself. The nations simply looked on horror-struck. Pursued by the furies of her own past crimes, and oppressed by a mysterious horror, she passed sentence of death upon herself, and set up the scaffold for her own execution. She had denied the being of a God, and so had committed the crime of high treason against Heaven. The nation that so rebels is not worthy to live; and the government of God is so conducted that it cannot live. And France, moved by an invisible but irresistible power, expiated her unexampled crime by a doom equally unexampled. "The world's history is the judgment of the world," says Schiller. France had said there is no God; and now France became the most terrific monument the world ever saw of the eternal existence and holy and omnipotent government of that God whose being she had denied.

CHAPTER IX.

THE THIRD VIAL: OR, THE RIVERS AND FOUNTAINS
OF BLOOD.

WITH the third vial there comes an extension of the judgment. On France principally, but not exclusively, the first and second vials had been poured out. From France as a centre the plague spreads all around. By retaining France in her communion in the days of Henry IV., Rome had retained Europe in her communion; and now France becomes the door by which atheism and revolution enter the papal earth. In all the countries of Papal Europe the principles of Voltaire had taken root; and wherever infidelity was found, there was found along with it, and fostered by it, a tendency to revolution. Hitherto France alone had stood before the great white throne. Other countries had been spectators, but awe-struck spectators, of her appalling punishment. Now the cup passes over to them. At the bar of the great Judge they too are sisted, and become partners with France in doom, as aforetime they had been partners with her in crime. "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the

rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood" —(Rev. xvi. 4).

A reference to the type will aid us in expounding the vial. Ancient Egypt was traversed by numerous canals and rivulets, which, running off from the Nile, watered the country in all directions. When the Nile was turned into blood, the streams which drew their supplies from it also became blood ; so that, as we are expressly told, "there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt." The same thing is repeated in the mystic Egypt. France, the Nile of the papal world, its glory and strength, is first turned into blood ; but now the minor countries of the papal earth, its "rivers and fountains," are also turned into blood ; so that there is blood throughout the whole of Papal Europe. The symbol here is one of undoubted import. Rivers represent nations. So does the angel interpret it to John. "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues"—(Rev. xvii. 15). These are the waters which were now turned into blood. The judgment of this vial is WAR.

The Revolution in France was followed by a most extraordinary outburst of the military energies. From a soil moistened with blood there arose a race of warriors such as the world had never before seen. These men panted to plant the principles of the Revolution in other countries ; although, in doing so, it should be necessary to enact in them the same scenes of rapine and carnage which had converted France into a Gol-

gotha. A leader of consummate genius and unbounded ambition arose to marshal them. The Huns that followed Attila, the Tartars that shouted behind Tamerlane, were inferior in numbers, in ferocity, and zeal, to the armies that gathered to the standard of Napoleon. Reared in the school of the Revolution, familiar with blood, callous to human suffering, believing in no God, their passions raised to an inconceivable pitch of strength by the wild excitement of the times, they stood prepared for their allotted task of dethroning kings, abolishing religion, changing the constitution of States, and carrying desolation and death to every country, to every city, and to almost every home, on the Continent of Europe. Such, it was now seen, was the terrible instrument which France, bleeding and agonizing, had prepared, in the midst of her own death-throes, for the chastisement of the world. Napoleon at the head of this host,—like an army of fiends than of ordinary soldiers,—crossed the Alps, descended on Italy, on Spain, on Austria, and for twenty dismal years made these lands the scene of ceaseless and bloody conflict. This vial dates from 1796. Then the campaigns of Napoleon opened, by which the “rivers and fountains of waters,” on which the harlot sat, were turned into blood. Not that judgment now ceased in France. Awful as were the sufferings she inflicted on other countries, not less awful were those she herself endured. She was consuming, all the while, in the conflagration in which she had wrapped Europe. “The flower of her youth,” says

Alison, "was marched away by a relentless power, to the harvest of death."*

To enumerate all the miseries and woes contained in that vial which was poured out by the instrumentality of Napoleon, would be to recount the history of Europe during these twenty dismal years. Who is adequate to such a task? The thrilling narrative of Scott, the lucid and instructive pages of Alison, and a hundred recitals besides, of the wars and woes of that period, by as many authors, have spread out a tale of suffering,—a tragedy so intense in its sorrow, so vast in its sphere,—that history has not its like to show in any other age of the world. In no other twenty years was there ever so much blood spilt,—were there ever so many tears shed. The conqueror began his career—the first burning streams of the third vial fell—on the flanks of the Apennines. Napoleon passed northwards, slaughtering his foes by tens of thousands in the mountain gorges. Emerging on the fertile plain of Piedmont, his army rolled like a tempest of fire, in the face of the high Alps, along the plain of Lombardy, till it reached the shores of the Adriatic and the domes of Venice. What terrible traces marked its passage! The blood of man was given to the sword, the honour of woman became the prey of brutal lust. The harvests of the land were devoured, and its opulent cities delivered to pillage and the flames. Their treasures were rifled, their sanctuaries desecrated, their

* History of Europe, vol. v. p. 30.

princes and archdukes dethroned ; and this devastation went on till the awful carnage of Marengo terminated the conqueror's career of blood on the plains of Italy.

He next launched his armies upon Germany. Bavaria, Bohemia, Austria, the Rhine, and parts of Prussia, became the theatre of his wars. As he had closed his career in Italy with one memorable and terrible conflict, he opened it in Germany with another equally memorable and terrible. From the carnage of Marengo his eagles passed to the "glories" of Austerlitz. From Austerlitz they flew from battle-field to battle-field, and from victory to victory, till eastern Europe was prostrate beneath the foot of the conqueror. Pillage, rapine, the smoke of burning, the blackness of desolation, death in all its horrible forms, attended him here, as in Italy. Man's blood watered the earth like rain : human carcases covered the fields like dung. The city was silent, the country empty ; for the life that had peopled them had been mowed down in one red harvest, and gathered into the gory trench. Over the whole of that vast area, from the shores of the Atlantic on the west to the frontier of Russia on the east, and the waters of the Scheldt on the north, comprising innumerable kingdoms, principalities, dukedoms, and provinces, had the sword of Napoleon been waved, and all their "rivers and fountains of waters" had he turned into blood. He was now virtual ruler of all Europe. Under him were a million of men in arms. His empire was greater than any that had existed

since the fall of the Roman empire. Britain alone defied his power.

So long as Napoleon stood upon the papal earth he was omnipotent. A high Power had chained victory to his eagles ; and what army he would he discomfited, and what throne he would he cast down. But the moment he passed beyond these limits, he was weak as another man. He entered Russia, and lo ! the fabric of his greatness suddenly dissolved. He fled before the fate which had smitten him, to find, after a few ineffectual struggles, a grave in the solitary isle of St Helena. It is reckoned that five millions of Frenchmen were carried away by his conscription, to die on foreign fields. The numbers belonging to other nations who perished in his wars transcend all reckoning. It is no exaggeration to say, that not an individual of the then existing population of Europe, within the limits we have specified, wholly escaped the calamities of that awful period. Here is somewhere about an hundred millions, all of whom were more or less directly sufferers under the third vial. This is an aggregate of misery which baffles the imagination by its very magnitude. Thus were the rivers of the papal earth turned into blood ; and thus was the terrible threatening against the mystic Edom executed,— “ Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end : therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood,

and blood shall pursue thee : sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee"—(Ezek. xxxv. 5, 6).

There is now a pause, and during that pause the song of the angel of the waters is heard ascending. " And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy"—(Rev. xvi. 5, 6). This bids us take note how manifestly retributive and undeniably holy were these judgments of God. It intimates, too, that there would be something in the outward form of these judgments, or in the mode of their infliction, which would most surely indicate that they were meant to avenge the blood of the martyrs. And was it not so ? Where did these wars rage the fiercest ? Where was the blood of battle the oftenest shed ? Was it not in those countries where the *auto da fe* had the oftenest blazed ? Was it not in the cities of Spain, on the plains of Piedmont, in the towns of Lombardy, in the very localities, in short, where the gospel had attempted to obtain a footing at the Reformation, but where it had been put down by persecution ? Nay, some of the bloodiest of Napoleon's many bloody fields were fought on almost the very spot where the stake had been planted to burn the martyr. The blood of battle washes out the blood of martyrdom. It is subjoined, " with an emphatic abruptness," says Bengel, " They

are worthy.”* The angel of the waters is answered by the angel of the altar, or rather, as we are disposed to think, by the souls from beneath the altar, who had before been heard crying for vengeance, and are now heard acknowledging God’s answer to their prayers,—“ And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.”†

Even at the early stage of the third vial, what ruin has fallen on the papal earth ! Already it may be cried, “ Babylon is fallen.” But a few years before, we had seen her reposing royally on her sacred mount, and saying, “ I sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow.” Had she not around her numerous kingdoms, whose riches she had “ found as a nest ?” Had she not as sons puissant monarchs, whose swords were ready to defend her ? Who could count the multitude of her people ? Who could tell the height of her towers and the strength of her bars ? But ah ! how little did these avail when the day of wrath came ! Her towers might keep the earth in awe, but they could not terrify Heaven. The closer they pressed to the seat of God, the nearer

* Abrupta oratio magna, vi.—*Bengelii Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, p. 727.

† “ Ήκουσα τον Θυσιαστηριον λεγοντο;,”—literally, “ I heard the altar saying.” The passage undoubtedly refers back to the cry from beneath the altar at the opening of the fifth seal. The souls of those slain had prayed to God, as “ holy and true,” for the avenging of their blood ; and now they acknowledge the judgments which had fallen on the earth as “ true and righteous.” They recognise them as an answer to their cry.

they lay to his lightnings. And now, as fell the walls of Jericho at the seventh blast of the rams' horns, so fell the bulwarks of Babylon at the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet. Rome had said in her heart, "I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God"—(Isa. xiv. 13). But, replied the prophet—(Obad. 4)—"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord."

This vial ran out in 1815 with the battle of Waterloo, which closed for ever Napoleon's career, and intermitted for a while the sufferings of the papal earth. Europe had rest for thirty years. It is sufficiently striking, that there is an interruption in the narrative of the vials at the very point where the pause occurs in the actual history. God was waiting for the repentance of the papal nations. But they repented not; and therefore the drama of judgment is resumed.

CHAPTER X.

THE FOURTH VIAL : OR, THE SUN OF FIRE.

WHEN the field of Waterloo was stricken, the last terrible drops of the third vial had fallen on the papal earth. Europe now enjoyed a respite. Men began to restore the landmarks which the deluge had obliterated, and to set up the edifices which the tempest had overturned. The kings re-occupied their thrones; the papal hierarchy resumed its state, though in shorn splendour; the Bourbons returned to France; and thus the season of grace was wasted in efforts to restore the old tyrannies and idolatries. Pitiable sight! “In vain have I smitten your children: they received no correction.” Symptoms were not wanting of returning wrath. At times the papal world was felt to rock upon its foundations: the elder Bourbons were precipitated from the throne of France; but, alas! these and other signs were unheeded. And now the drama is resumed with the pouring out of the fourth vial. “And the fourth angel—(Rev. xvi. 8, 9)—poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God,

who hath power over these plagues ; and they repented not, to give Him glory."

Let us mark here the change of phrase ; for, though a minute trait, it is beautifully instructive. The angels henceforward pour their vials, not *into*, but *upon* their objects. The first angel poured his vial *into* the earth ; the second poured his *into* the sea ; and the third poured his *into* the rivers ; but the fourth is said to have poured his *upon* the sun. The principles of atheism and revolution which constituted the first and second vials, and led to the woes of the third, were infused into society. They grew out of the nations which suffered from them ; and this is strikingly taught by the peculiarity of phrase employed. But when we read that the fourth vial was poured, not *into*, but *upon* the sun, we are led to expect that the calamity would come, not *ab intra*, like the preceding vials, but *ab extra* ; that it would have its first beginning, not in the sun himself, but in a quarter without him. How exactly this expectation is realized the sequel will show.*

What is the sun of this symbolic world ? This requires but short discussion : the symbol is almost

* The significance of this peculiarity has not been noticed by interpreters of the vials, so far as we are aware. In the first three vials, the preposition *εἰς* (into) is used ; in the last four the preposition *επί* (upon) is employed. In striking agreement with the language, the woes of the first three vials—atheism, revolution, and revolutionary wars—arose within the papal nations ; the woes of the remaining four, as will be seen, struck their objects from without.

self-interpreting, having passed into the common language of men. In numerous poetical and metaphorical passages of Scripture, as well as prophetical, it is employed, and always so, as the representative of the ruling authority in society. The sun of the fourth vial is undoubtedly the monarchs and governments of the papal world,—not one in particular, but the whole combined. The calamity of this vial was to afflict kings and rulers, whose power it was at first to abridge, but afterwards greatly to strengthen, or rather to inflame. Now, let us mark the progression. This series of woes, or rather this one gigantic woe,—for the whole seven constitute the third woe,—begins with individuals in atheism, extends next to the one nation of France in the Revolution, spreads, in the third place, to all the nations of Papal Europe in the wars of Napoleon; and now, rising above the earth, and sea, and rivers of this symbolic world, it mounts to the luminaries of its firmament. It eclipses the combined MONARCHY of Papal Europe. This vial, we are disposed to think, was the Revolution of 1848.*

The facts are still fresh, and we are spared the necessity of going into detail. On the 23d of February

* The author deems it due both to the public and himself here to state, that when he published his "Seventh Vial," he was of opinion that the Revolution of 1848 was the last vial. He has since had reason to change his opinion on that point. He now thinks that we are not so far advanced in the vials as he then believed. He has watched, not inattentively, the course of events in connection with prophecy during the fourteen years which have elapsed since the publication of his "Seventh Vial,"

1848 the Revolution broke out in Paris. The capital rose in insurrection ; the army refused to act, and the king fled. The Revolution spread with the rapidity of lightning over the whole of Papal Europe ; and by the 5th of March—a single fortnight—every country lying betwixt the Atlantic and the Vistula had been revolutionized. The kingdom of Spain felt the shock ; the empire of Austria was for the time broken up ; the kingdom of Sardinia and the dukedoms of central Italy were in revolt ; the electorates of the Rhine, the principalities of Germany, the kingdoms of Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria,—all were revolutionized ; their constitutions were annulled, their rulers were chased away, and the mob was the sovereign. The force of armies and the ability of statesmen were alike powerless to stay the Revolution. It was triumphant from the straits of Sicily to the shores of the Baltic, from the waters of the Tagus to the banks of the Vistula. It touched the frontier of Russia, and was rolled back. A second time had this most significant fact been shown. The Revolution of 1848 lost its power at the precise spot where Napoleon lost his. He whose servants they were had limited their commission to the papal earth ; and victory said to both, when they at-

and he is now satisfied that the Revolution of 1848 was the pouring out of the Fourth Vial. His grounds for so thinking are given above. The author begs to add, that of the matters discussed in the "Seventh Vial," it is on this point alone that he has changed his views. To the line of interpretation there adopted he still unhesitatingly adheres.

tempted to pass over that boundary, “ Hitherto, but no farther.” Here, then, we have this remarkable fact to note, that whereas on the 23d of February every throne of Papal Europe was filled, in a month thereafter every throne, Spain excepted, was seen to be empty. Every monarch had been chased into exile. Thus did the angel pour out his vial upon the sun.

The vial was sent, not to extinguish the sun, but only to eclipse him ; that, after the eclipse had passed, he might blaze forth in more scorching fervour and heat. “ And power was given unto him,”—that is, unto the sun,*—“ to scorch men with fire. And men”—the same men of the former vials, the men of the papal earth—“ were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, who hath power over these plagues.” How the sun should be smitten, and yet become more powerful, would not beforehand have been easily understood ; but the event made all plain. The Revolution speedily degenerated into anarchy ; the sword resumed its power ; a strong re-action set in ; and in 1849, every monarch whom the Revolution of the former year had driven away remounted his throne.

* “ *Kai εδοθη αυτῳ*” “and it was given him,”—i. e., the sun. Bengel says, power was given the *angel*.—*Gnomon*, p. 727. So does Hengstenberg, vol. ii. p. 163. So, too, Elliot.—*Horæ Apocalypticæ*, vol. iii. p. 343. Alford, guided simply by the grammatical construction, says, not the *angel*, but the *sun*.—*The Greek Testament*, vol. iv. part ii. p. 695. We agree with Alford, who justly remarks, in confirmation of his opinion, “ the angels throughout these visions are simply the pourers out of the vials, not the executors of the plagues.”

They began to coerce, and, if possible, extinguish, the anarchy which had hurled them from their seats ; and so the sun, eclipsed temporarily by the vial of 1848, commenced in the re-action of 1849 to scorch men with the fires of a most consuming tyranny.

It may be doubted whether there is another ten years in the world's history during which so many miseries were endured, simply from the every-day working of government, as were endured by the papal nations from 1849 to 1859. A continuous rain of fire from the sun of power scorched men all throughout that decade. Of course, the Continental rulers had eminently the tyrant's plea—necessity. They knew that they must coerce,—coerce with unpitying and unrelaxing rigour,—or cease to reign. It was now the government of the sabre. From side to side of Europe nothing was seen but camps, and nothing was heard but the clanking of chains and the sighs of captives. In France the Legislative Assembly was swept off to prison ; the merchants and artizans were carried in ship-loads to Cayenne ; the towns swarmed with gens d'armes and spies ; the press was struck dumb ; every man of distinction and independence in the nation was banished or imprisoned ; the regular functions of government were totally suspended ; and France was transformed into a silent desert, in the midst of which stood one colossal figure, its master and ruler. It was as if all the lesser and milder lights had been swept from the sky, and there remained only one fierce sun blazing in the zenith.

It was the same in Austria. The sun of Hapsburg, emerging from portentous eclipse, and renewing its beams in the blood of the capital, looked forth anew, and began to rain its fire upon its various and widely-extended nationalities. Its Italian possessions it overwhelmed with Croats, with proscriptions, with fiscal oppressions. The citizens were shot in thousands; the youth were dragged away to foreign service, or, if exempted from conscription, were doomed to live as slaves, and repress every aspiration of liberty, under peril of the bastinado and the dungeon. Where sits the queenly Milan, rivalling the Alps themselves in the snowy whiteness of her towers and cathedral spires, there brooded the silence of death; and where Lombardy lies outspread within her rampart of glorious hills, the eternal verdure of her plains refreshed by mighty, never-failing rivers, sorrow, like a cloud, had descended on the land, and on the faces of men were imprinted despair and very weariness of life. In her lagunes sat Venice, cowering beneath the shadow of the Austrian eagle. The waves of Garda, raised by the breezes of the Tyrol, chafed the iron walls of Peschiera; the classic Mincio flowed beneath the dark moats of Mantua; the kingly Po rolled his floods through faded and desolate cities; the immortal names of Padua, Bologna, Ferrara, had become but symbols of desolation. The dukedoms and principalities on the southern slope of the Apennines, governed by subalterns of Hapsburg, were on a small scale what the Austrian empire was on a great. Each ruler played the tyrant

within his own petty dominions ; and the little satellite, after the example of the great sun, strove to rain fire on his subjects to the full measure of his ability. In her lovely valley, where lingers eternal summer, sat Florence, lading the breeze, as it blew from Fiesoli, with the sighs of captives. Everywhere it was the same. Tyranny and terror went hand in hand. There stood a sentinel at every door : there sat a spy at every hearth : an eye looked into every bosom : the confessor and the gens d'arme were in alliance, and their tyranny scorched at once the body and the soul. But let us confess the righteousness of the great Judge. The men of the papal earth had in former ages lent themselves as the tools of power, to oppress the confessors of the gospel. Now the wheel had revolved, and those who in other days were the tools, had now become the victims, of tyranny. If the champions of the gospel had not been extinguished in the sixteenth century, the champions of liberty would not have been overwhelmed with dungeons and scaffolds in the nineteenth.

This tyranny becomes but the more terrible as we advance southward. It was in Rome and Naples that this scorching of men with fire reached its climax. Our nation has not yet forgotten how it was thrilled by the appalling disclosures which Mr Gladstone gave of the state of the dungeons in Naples, the numbers of the prisoners,—amounting to somewhere about thirty thousand, almost all persons of condition, and confined for political offences solely,—and the horrible cha-

racter of the sufferings to which they were doomed. But there was another region of Italy yet more miserably oppressed,—the States of the Church, to wit. In these wretched provinces the prisoners were equally numerous, the dungeons equally crowded and filthy, the sufferings equally horrible, and the cruelty was yet more terrible, because more secret, than in Naples. In short, since the day of the Pope's return to Rome down to the present hour, the history of the Papal States is one continuous, unvaried, and most appalling tale of apprehensions, torturings, secret condemnations, banishments, and horrible executions.

As during the reign of the guillotine in Paris, so now during the exercise of this tyranny, especially in southern Europe, the ordinary functions of life and the common pursuits of society were at an end. The prosecution of trade, the cultivation of the intellect, the promotion of works of art, and the advancement of social institutions, were all abandoned. Everything did rulers subordinate to their one object of striking terror into their subjects. If there is a country under heaven peculiarly adapted for commerce, it is Italy. It lies between two hemispheres ; it is surrounded on all sides by the sea ; its soil has a tropical fertility ; its climate is delicious ; and yet trade and commerce it had none. Its harbours were without ships, its roads without passengers or traffic, its towns without industry ; the plastic genius of its people was wasted in dreamy idleness or debasing vice. Its fields, comparatively speaking, lay uncultivated. Its inhabitants

lacked the skill, the tools, and especially the motive, to develop the exhaustless riches of its soil. If you entered its towns, you saw a few shadows gliding through deserted streets, their brows clouded, their eyes downcast, their cheeks sunken, and their steps heavy and slow, as if they dragged a fetter at their limbs. Of the movements in the free countries of the world the Italian knew no more than if he lived in the moon or in Jupiter. Thus was a great gulf between him and the civilized earth. As regarded freedom of conscience, what had he to do with conscience? To name it even was to commit a crime which could be expiated only on the scaffold. He had the Church to think for him, to believe for him; he had been born in the Church; in the Church he must die; or, if he dared to die beyond its pale, he was buried with the burial of a dog. Every part of the papal earth did this fire scorch; but in Rome and Naples it inflicted the blackness of utter desolation.

Tyrants and tyrannies have been on the earth ever since the foundation of the world; but these tyrannies were almost always a means to an end. They were the agencies for the founding of an empire, the embellishing of a kingdom, or the attainment of some object whose greatness threw a splendour over the despotism which was employed to effect it. But never till this period did a tyranny exist for its own base self,—simply and solely to oppress, to crush, and to destroy. Yet such were the tyrannies of the papal earth, and especially Naples and Rome. These despotisms were

at once the most base, the most selfish, and the most flagitiously cruel that ever disgraced the annals of mankind. The Pharaohs were the masters of unnumbered slaves ; but that slavery which oppressed the individual enriched the nation. Cities arose, canals were dug, the waters of the Nile were taught to flow amid the sands of the desert, the valley of Egypt grew into a garden, and the pyramids arose to add grandeur to a scene to which the bounteous river had already given fertility and beauty. The Chaldean despots reared the princely Babylon and the queenly Nineveh, and made the Euphrates and the Tigris the great highways of commerce. The Cæsars, no doubt, made terrible encroachments on liberty ; but they palliated these encroachments by giving to mankind what they had taken from the individual. They constructed roads, viaducts, harbours, arches, amphitheatres, and other works which tended to train the faculties, improve the taste, provide for the amusement, and add to the health and comfort, of their subjects. But the despots of the papal earth have been the littlest and the most miserable of mankind. What work of art, what ornament, rises under the popes ? We have the monuments of Nero and of Caracalla, showing that even these men, amid their enormous vices and tyrannies, were not wholly dead to the admiration of the grand and the appreciation of the useful ; but when the rulers of southern Europe shall have passed away, what monument will remain to show that any one idea or aim was for a moment present to their minds save the pre-

servation of their own rule ? They seem to have existed for no end save to fill the prisons, to work the galleys, and to people their realm with widows and orphans. Other tyrants have been the leaders in civilization : these tyrants have striven to shut out knowledge and banish art, deeming themselves safe only when they had created a desert around them. Everywhere this tyranny did not reach the same pitch of consuming heat ; but everywhere men were scorched. Tyranny is subject to the law that governs all wickedness. The tyranny of to-day can support itself only by the greater tyranny of to-morrow ; the greater tyranny of to-morrow creates a yet greater host of enemies ; and thus, despite itself, despotism is compelled every hour to enlarge its sphere and intensify its force. This was abundantly shown during the past decade of tyranny in Papal Europe. It grew hotter year by year ; and sign of abatement it gave none, till checked by the next drama in the great judgment.

It is added emphatically, “ And men blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues ; and they repented not, to give him glory.” To a degree inexpressibly affecting and melancholy was this verified. The sufferers could be counted in millions ; but the penitents, where were they ? “ I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright : no one repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done ? ” The Church of Rome chose this era in which to offer her crowning blasphemy to the “ name of God,” by promulgating her dogma of the “ immaculate concep-

tion.” And as regards the inhabitants of papal lands, they still indulged in their gross idolatries and their obscene atheism. Their oppressors they loaded with execrations ; but no one presented supplication before the God of heaven ; nay, often, in the blindness of their minds and the bitterness of their anguish they “ fretted themselves, and cursed their king and their God, and looked upward.” Their rulers, like Pharaoh, in their first panic promised all that was asked of them, —liberty, political and religious ; but no sooner had they respite, than, like Pharaoh, they revoked without scruple all their concessions and promises, though sanctioned by oaths. It was a scene of commingled blasphemy, perjury, and suffering truly deplorable. Differing in other respects, all were alike in this, that, from the tyrant in the midst of his sbirri, to the slave-gang in the galleys and the victim in the dungeon, “ they repented not.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIFTH VIAL : OR, THE DARKNESS.

WE now transport ourselves to the midst of that great plain which reposes so royally between the Alps and the Apennines, forming Northern Italy. It is the 26th of April 1859, and the first shades of eve have descended upon the Alps. The mighty snow-clad top of Monte Rosa is burning in the light of the recent sunset. The Ticino, winding amidst fields of budding vines and young maize, is flowing along the plain, and rolling its majestic floods beneath the granite arches of Buffalora. Behind us is Milan, surrounded with great memories and Austrian fetters. In front is Turin, the capital of free Piedmont. On the left bank of the river musters the Austrian army, some two hundred thousand strong ; and in the quiet of this eventide they defile along the bridge that spans the Ticino, and take up their position amid the mulberry and sycamore woods that cover the plain. How quietly may war enter ! Betwixt us and Turin the little army of Piedmont has fixed its encampment ; and yonder in the west, where the lofty pyramidal summit of Monte Viso rises on the sight, the legions of France are hur-

rying along the routes, and defiling from the gorges of the Alps. For the stifled moans which for ten years have been ascending from the dungeons of Italy, we are now about to exchange the groans of the battle-field. There comes to that unhappy land, not a respite, but only, alas ! a change of misery. But if the Italian must still die, he will no longer rot with fetters on his limbs: he will now expire with weapons in his hands. “And the fifth angel—(Rev. xvi. 10)—poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.”

The term “seat” is a faulty rendering. In the original it is “throne.” “The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the *throne* of the beast.” The “seat” of the beast, in apocalyptic language, is Papal Europe; its “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues,” are the “waters” on which “the whore sitteth.” The “throne” of the beast must be understood as denoting that particular spot in Papal Europe where his personal presence and temporal power have their proper residence. It is the same “throne” which we had previously been told the dragon gave to the beast; the throne, namely, which the Caesars occupied, but which, on the fall of paganism, became the Pope’s. This limits the sphere of the vial to Italy; and the terms would lead us to expect some calamity upon the Pope’s temporal power, and especially on that part of Italy subject to his temporal jurisdiction.

This vial, too, has its prototype among the ten

THE GREAT EXODUS,

OR

“ THE TIME OF THE END : ”

HOW NEAR ARE WE TO IT?

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BY REV. J. A. WYLIE, LL.D.

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Egyptian plagues. The plague of darkness in Egypt, as here in the vials, came after the plague of fire, of which this peculiarity is recorded, that it “ran along upon the ground” in quest of its victims, as if the better to typify the searching and penetrating nature of that tyranny which in an after age was to run along like fire upon the papal earth. Then came the plague of darkness,—“darkness which may be felt.” The usual serenity of the sky in Egypt made this plague, doubtless, the more awful. Seldom did a cloud veil the sun or shade the landscape; but now, for three days the Egyptians “saw not one another, neither rose any from his place,”—a result owing, doubtless, not simply to the intensity of the darkness, but also to the horror of mind that accompanied it.

The fifth vial ushers in the plague of darkness in the Papal Egypt. Our readers have already inferred that we regard this vial as having begun to be poured out in the spring of 1859. Its opening scenes are to be found in the brief but decisive campaign waged betwixt the Austrians on the one side, and the French and Piedmontese on the other. Suddenly and mysteriously was Napoleon III. moved to declare war; and by three great battles,—Montebello, Magenta, and, greatest and bloodiest of all, Solferino,—did he end the campaign, and open a new chapter in the history of Italy. There arose from the bloody turf of Solferino, not what men expected, “Italy free from the Alps to the Adriatic,” but the chimerical project of a confederation, with the Pope at its head. This scheme

was soon put aside as impracticable. Next followed the conquest of Sicily and Naples by Garibaldi, the invasion of the States of the Church by Victor Emmanuel, and the absorption of the best portions of the Pope's temporal dominions. The affair, as men believed, was rapidly progressing towards the consummation so ardently wished by the Italians,—liberty and unity, to wit,—when the movement was suddenly brought up before the insoluble problem of the Papacy.

Let us mark, that the dregs of the war, if we may term them so, have gravitated to the temporal dominions of the Pope. They have not extinguished his “throne,” but they have darkened it. The war has eclipsed his temporal power, and very much diminished his territorial kingdom. It has reft from him the province of Bologna on the north of the Apennines, the marches of Ancona on the east of these mountains, and the comparatively fertile district on their western slope, down to the Umbrian vale; leaving him little besides the treeless desert around Rome, and the poor district of Viterbo. Before the campaign his subjects numbered upwards of three millions; now they scarcely amount to a half-million. Thus has the vial been poured upon the “throne” of the beast. But let us mark the retributive form of the judgment. For five centuries did Rome persecute the Waldensian confessors with the sword of France and Piedmont; and now by the sword of France and Piedmont is she herself stript of her temporal possessions.

Not only has the vial abridged the Pope's temporal kingdom ; it has filled it with darkness. *Darkness* is often used as a symbol in the Bible. When applied to Churches, it denotes spiritual and moral error : when applied to kingdoms or civil societies, it denotes social disorder and political confusion. It is here applied to the kingdom of the beast,—teaching us to look for an era, under the fifth vial, of confusion, social and political. And is not this the very condition of central and southern Italy at this hour ? A focus of insurrection and brigandage has been established at Rome ; band after band of outlaws and cut-throats go forth from the very presence of the pontiff, to keep alive agitation, rapine, and murder, in the territory of Naples ; and an army of sixty thousand Piedmontese scarce suffices to preserve order in that unhappy country. The annexed provinces of the Italian kingdom are breaking out into murmurs that their affairs are badly managed, owing to the distance of the seat of government at Turin. In Tuscany the Piedmontese and Leopoldine codes are in conflict, and persecution is recommencing ; the populations of the towns are raising the cry “To Rome ;” while the government at Turin, feeling how impossible is such a step at this moment, is struggling to hold the insurrectionary party in check. The present is complicated ; the future is uncertain.

But a still deeper darkness rests on Italy. Let us glance again at the type. It is said of the Egyptians, “neither rose any from his place for three days.”

Where each sat when the darkness overtook him, there he remained till light returned. Terror fixed him immovably on his seat. We may expect that the darkness of the fifth vial will arrest all political parties, and fix each immovably in his place while it lasts. And what do we see at this hour ? We behold all parties standing helplessly before a great insoluble problem. That problem is the Papacy. Italy is compelled to seek the cessation of the temporal power : the rest of the papal kingdoms are compelled to seek the continuance of the temporal power. How are these opposing interests to be conciliated ? Till this problem has been solved, the Italian kingdom cannot be constituted, and war and revolution will continue to menace Europe. Unhappily the question admits of everything but one thing. It admits of innumerable protocols, of endless negotiations, of interminable debates ; but it admits of no settlement. The question is darkness, and in this darkness do all parties at present sit. It is darkness that may be felt.

On this question hang the politics of Europe and the fate of Italy. There are three parties and three policies concerned in it. To its own particular line of policy is each party bound by past traditions, and by present most imperative exigencies. But the policy of each is an impossibility to the others. First comes Victor Emmanuel and the Italians. Victor Emmanuel wants Rome for his capital. Many a noble and beautiful city is there betwixt the Alps and the Straits of Messina : Turin, which the Po laves and

the Alps engirdle ; Genoa the superb, whose rampart is the sea and the Apennines ; Florence, which nestles beneath the shadow of Fiesoli, and drinks of the stream of the Arno ; Naples, with its lovely sky and its mirror-like bay. What other monarch can boast that he is master of so many magnificent cities ? But between the Alps and Sicily there is but one Rome ; and nature and the prestige of twenty-five centuries have made that Rome the capital of Italy. Rome is the one bond of the Italian States. So long as the Pope occupies Rome, there are two monarchs in the one Italian kingdom. The imperious necessity of the situation, therefore, constrains Victor Emmanuel to say to the Pontiff,—“ Give me Rome, and demit your temporal sovereignty : I must be the one king of Italy.”*

But this is precisely what the Pope cannot do. Rome and the temporal princedom are the centre of union to the universal Roman Church. Let the Papacy surrender these, and schism immediately ensues. France, Spain, Austria, would break off from the Italian Church, and erect themselves into as many independent Churches, and the unity of the great spiritual confederacy would be at an end. In presence of a danger so tremendous, the Pope dare not surrender his tem-

* M. Guizot says justly,—“ Pour qu'aux yeux et dans la pensée du monde, l'unité Italienne soit réelle, il faut que Rome en soit le siége. Pour devenir réellement le chef de l'unité Italienne, le Piemont est condamné à détrôner, dans Rome, la Papauté.—*L'Eglise et La Société Chrétiennes en 1861.* Par M. Guizot. P. 142. Paris, 1861.

poral power, granting even that the logic of the Papacy permitted him to do so. But this it sternly forbids. Out of the same axiom come both the temporal and the spiritual supremacy. The Pope is Christ's vicar. As Christ's vicar, he has every whit as good a title to his temporal power as to his spiritual. And how can he put asunder what his theory of vicarship makes one? or with what show of consistency could he renounce the one-half of his divine office and retain the other half, seeing it rests on precisely the same foundation? Moreover, the traditions and oaths of the past inexorably bind up the two in one system. The Pope must renounce both or neither.

The third policy is that of Louis Napoleon. He wishes to modify—he dare not abolish—the temporal power. He would leave to the Pope the rank, the independence, and the revenues of a temporal prince; but he would restrict his rule to the city of Rome, and he would assign to the Romans “prayers, and *la culture des ruines*,”* whatever that worship may be. Beyond this he has yet evinced no wish to proceed in the reduction of the temporal power,—if, indeed, it can be proved that he is willing to proceed so far; for, while he urges the Pope to make a change, he leaves the world ignorant of the extent and form of the change which he wishes the Pope to make; and at one and the same moment he recognises the kingdom of Italy, and protests against the absorption of the States of the Church

* *Le Pape et le Congrès.* Paris, 1860.

by Piedmont. The Emperor of the French has to balance conflicting interests, and weigh opposing claims. He has to set over against each other the urgencies of his zealous cousin and the remonstrances of his superstitious wife ; the popularity he would win in Italy, and the wrath he would awaken among the French priesthood ; the thanks he would receive from Protestant Europe, and the loss he would sustain in quitting his hold on the strategical positions of Rome and Civita Vecchia, held in prospect of certain European eventualities. One thing is certain, he will never willingly permit the Pope to become the subject of Victor Emmanuel. His Italian policy is to a large extent a make-believe. To withdraw his troops from Rome is what he never intended, and does not now intend.

Besides these three, there are other parties who claim a voice in the settlement of the affairs of Italy. The Catholic sovereigns of Spain and Austria, no more than the Emperor of the French, can permit the pontiff to descend into the rank of a subject. Were the Roman Church confined to Italy, the question were of easy solution. The Pope might assume whatever position Victor Emmanuel and the Italian nation chose to give him. But while his temporal kingdom is insignificant, his spiritual domains are greater far than those of any sovereign in Europe. Of these he cannot be despoiled. You may make him a subject ; but he is a subject with an empire. You say it is a spiritual empire. Very true ; but it is a spiritual empire wielding vast political power. The members of that empire

are spread over Catholic Europe : many of them are persons of high culture, commanding position, and great talent : they are bound alike by their oaths and by their interests to obedience to the pontiff : many of them do most conscientiously believe that the Pope is God's vicar, and would no more dare withstand his will, or disobey his behest, than they would God himself. This is a tremendous power,—it is a power far too tremendous to be wielded by any one of the sovereigns of Europe ; but it *would* be wielded by that particular sovereign whose subject the Pope might chance to become. Let us suppose that the Pope becomes the subject of Victor Emmanuel. What happens ? Nothing particular so long as peace is maintained. But we shall suppose that war breaks out betwixt Italy and some other Catholic nation. The Pope, living at the court of Victor Emmanuel, a subject of the kingdom, a pensioner on the State, naturally takes the side of his sovereign, or can be brought to do so ; and thus Victor Emmanuel is able to play off the whole power of the priesthood, not of Italy only, but of Catholic Europe, against his opponent. Or, let us suppose that the Pope becomes the subject of Louis Napoleon : in that event the balance of power is disturbed in favour of France. And so as regards Austria, and so as regards Spain : whichever monarch is fortunate enough to have the head of the Church for a subject, would add to his temporal crown the spiritual sovereignty,—to his earthly dominions the far wider domain of Catholicism. That particular monarch would, in short, unite

under his sceptre two empires, and would become more than a match for any one of his brother sovereigns, or, it might be, for all of them together. This is the one formidable difficulty before which all the kings and statesmen of Europe stand helpless at this hour. They neither can permit the Pope to be a sovereign, nor can they permit him to be a subject. They cannot permit him to be a sovereign ; for while he is so, the Italian kingdom cannot be constituted, and revolution will again break out. They cannot permit him to be a subject, because this would disturb the balance of power, and expose to internal perils and divisions every Catholic State in Europe. How these conflicting interests are to be reconciled, the wit of man cannot discover. The problem is insoluble. It is darkness,—darkness that may be felt. "We dwell in darkness," exclaims M. Guizot, in his chapter on the future of Europe,—"We dwell in darkness, and walk on ruins."*

Three of the leading intellects of Europe have lately addressed themselves to the solution of this problem ; but their attempts have only made more manifest how deep is the darkness which at this hour covers the European world. Count Cavour essayed a solution. Going boldly up, like another Oedipus, to this Sphinx, he read her riddle thus :—"A free Church in a free State." This formula is memorable from its brevity, —striking from its epigrammatic terseness ; but it announces a chimera, and seeks to effect a contradiction.

* *L'Eglise et la Société Chrétiennes en 1861*, par M. Guizot, p. 199.

Cavour believed that he had solved the riddle, when he had only given utterance to a fine phrase. Translate that phrase into fact, and what have you?—a popular monarchy ruling by constitutional law, bound up with an infallible Church ruling by canon law. This is not “a free Church in a free State.” This is an *enslaving* Church in an *enslaved* State. With a Church whose fundamental dogma is, that “God alone is lord of the conscience,” and which holds the correlative, even “the right of private judgment,” you may have a “free Church in a free State.” But with a Church whose fundamental dogma is that “she herself is lord of the conscience,” and holds the correlative, even absolute, unconditional submission to her authority on the part of every human being, and which possesses a subtle and powerful machinery for enforcing that authority, you have only one of two things in your choice: you must by civil statute give to the citizen that freedom of religious profession and worship which the Church denies him, and so you fetter the Church; or, if you cannot fetter the Church, but must give all and every freedom of action to her, you sacrifice the liberty of the State. But Count Cavour’s programme was not a choice. It embraced both sides of the alternative in one policy. It surrendered the intellects and souls of the Italians to infallibility; it retained only their bodies under the constitutional regime. This liberty would not have lasted long, and would have been of little value while it did last. This was all the solution of the problem which the great genius and undoubted pa-

triotism of Cavour could give. If you turn a wolf into a sheepfold, you will have a free wolf no doubt, and he will know well what use to make of his freedom ; but will you have a free fold ? Only, would a plain man say, when you have muzzled the wolf. But Cavour specially undertook that the wolf should not be muzzled. It was to be a "free Church" in Italy. Cavour was to put the wolf open-mouthed into the fold, with full liberty to follow his instincts and inclinations. Canon law and constitutional law were to rule together in the same country. Light and darkness were to dwell together in Italy. We know that they can work miracles at Rome. But when they shall have taught the old lion of the Vatican to eat straw like the ox, and young Italian liberty to play unharmed beside the den of the old cockatrice, we will admit that they have wrought a miracle which surpasses all that their annals heretofore can show.

M. Guizot has also volunteered a solution, but with no better success. It is curious to mark, that while M. Cavour from the Roman side demands the abolition of the Pope's temporal sovereignty, M. Guizot from the Protestant side argues as strenuously in its behalf. So much for the darkness on the minds of men. M. Guizot's programme includes an entire severance of the Church and the State throughout Europe.* To this general law, however, which he believes to be essential to religious liberty, he makes one extraordinary excep-

* *L'Eglise et la Société Chrétiennes*, pp. 45, 46.

tion. That Catholicism may be free, the Pope must retain his temporal sovereignty, and be the head at once of Church and State in his dominions. Guizot denounces the project of Cavour to dethrone the Pope, as one of the strangest acts of usurpation known to history ; and an attack, in fact, on the rights of Catholics in Spain, in England, in America, and all over the world.* He counsels the Church to accept fully and sincerely the principle of religious liberty. " This principle," he continues, " will not touch a single one of the essential foundations of Catholicism : neither its unity nor its infallibility will be destroyed thereby." An astounding proposition, truly ! How can infallibility on the part of the Church co-exist with the right of private judgment on the part of her members ? If she speaks infallibly, those she addresses have no right save to believe. But if they may believe or not as they please, then does she not speak infallibly. And next, M. Guizot calls on some one of commanding genius and influence within that Church to proclaim in her name the abjuration of the dogma of authority, and the recognition of the right of private judgment, and the absolute incompetence of force in matters of belief.† Does M. Guizot know what he asks ? Is he aware that he asks the Papacy to proclaim that it is no longer the Papacy,—that it abandons all the principles and traditions of the past, and embraces the fundamental dogma of Protestantism ? That one who

* See his chapter, " L'Eglise Catholique en Italie."

† See his chapter, " L'Eglise Catholique et la Liberté."

in his time has borne no unimportant part in the government of Europe should propound a project so hopelessly and preposterously chimerical at a grave crisis like the present, only shows how ill the real question is understood, and what darkness surrounds the lights of the age.

We advert to but one other solution,—that of the Abbé Passaglia. His scheme is, in brief, that the Pope should demit his temporal functions. Give us, says the Abbé, the “separation of the sceptre from the keys,—of the sacerdotal mitre from the kingly diadem.” “This,” he continues, “the Italians with one voice demand; this the Christians of all Europe demand; this the dangers which threaten Church and State demand; and this the Pope’s office, as pastor of the universal flock, demands.”* His scheme is intelligible, but at this hour it is utterly impracticable. The Pope and the cardinals cling to the temporal sovereignty, and will continue to cling to it. Voluntary abdication would be followed by instant schism in the Church, and enforced abdication would be the signal for immediate war among the Catholic sovereigns. Thus, whichever way you turn, tremendous difficulties meet you. The leaders of Europe grope in night. The problem that vexes them can have no solution, save such solution as some great catastrophe may bring it. The true solution, of course, is the extinction of the Papacy, spiritual and temporal. This

* *Pro Causa Italica ad Episcopos Catholicos, actore Presbytero Catholicico.* Florentiæ, 1861.

solution, unhappily, all parties unite in repudiating. The kings aim at preserving Catholicism, and conciliating it with a free and prosperous Italy. This, too, is the aspiration of the Italian people. To this hour they connect the future glory of their country with the Catholic Church, shorn, indeed, of its temporal sovereignty, but restored to its pristine spiritual splendour, and made great, national, and flourishing. All parties have been smitten with blindness ; and the kingdom of the beast is “full of darkness.”

It is added, “they gnawed their tongues for pain.” The figure implies bitter disappointment and intolerable anguish. It presents the picture of persons chafing impotently under some restraint unspeakably galling and mortifying. It is not said who gnawed their tongues. The plague of fire scorched the *men* of the papal earth. The plague of the darkness is more extensive ; it smites rulers and ruled ; and we may regard both as here suffering torment. Do we not, in point of fact, see all parties at this hour so suffering ? The angry recriminations and bitter wailings which ever and anon reach us from the Continent, what are they but a gnawing of the tongue ? No one can read the recent allocutions of the Pope without being reminded of the Apocalyptic figure. In his allocution of October 1860, he tells us that he was enduring “incredible sadness,” “deep bitterness of spirit,” on account “of the new and hitherto unheard of attempts committed against us.” In his reply to a letter of sympathy from Ireland, June 1860, he says,

—“We are cheered to learn what and how great is your own filial piety, esteem, and attachment to us and to this chair of Peter, and how great and bitter were your sorrow, grief, and indignation on account of the most iniquitous and sacrilegious onslaughts against our civil authority, and that of this apostolic see, daringly perpetrated by wicked men, who, waging the most atrocious war on the Catholic Church and this same see, hesitate not to trample under foot all rights, divine and human, alike.” In another allocution, August 1860, the Pope tells us, that he is “drinking to the lees the cup of bitterness and sorrow.” The *Times* called these allocutions “a continuous shriek of cursing.” The phrase is in the spirit of the Apocalyptic prediction. The mortification of other parties is inferior only to that of the Pope and the cardinals. Victor Emmanuel and the statesmen of Turin have been grievously and perplexingly baffled by the obstacles to the constitution of the kingdom of Italy; and the whole nation has been doomed to see the vision of Italian unity recede. “This,” says Mazzini, writing to the students at Pavia, “is a perennial source of remorse.” Thus do all parties gnaw their tongues for pain.

“And blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.” There is yet no intimation in the prophecy of any abatement in either the suffering or the sinning. We have now come to the verge of the last vial; but all parties are as hardened as at the beginning. Like Pharaoh, they are impenitent to the very end. Alford

well remarks that the plague is cumulative. We find the "sores" of the first vial, the "pains" of the fourth vial, mingled with the darkness of the fifth vial, on the "men of the earth." And what is the papal world at this hour, but a mixture of atheism, tyranny, superstition, and political confusion ? But this combination of suffering, so far from inducing repentance, only raises the blasphemy to a higher pitch. Of this blaspheming of the God of heaven on account of these plagues, take the following instance :—"Therefore," says the Pope, in the allocution of October 1860, "let us not cease to offer up assiduously our most fervent prayers, imploring, above all, the most efficacious intercession of the Most Holy and Immaculate Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, and the suffrages of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, that He may display the power of his arms, and shatter the pride of his enemies."

Neither have the Italians to this hour confessed their own and their fathers' sins, and given glory to God by abandoning their idolatries and embracing the gospel. They detest the temporal Papacy, and are prepared to throw off its yoke: to the spiritual Papacy they still bear true allegiance. The Pope as a *king* they curse; the Pope as a *priest* they venerate. God would have them see that the destroyer of their country's liberties has been their Church. For this end He has chased away all their temporal tyrants; He has rescued them from the yoke of Austria and of Naples. Of all their oppressors there remains now only one,—their Church, to wit. And even her

God has stript of well-nigh every particle of temporal power ; and yet in that Church the Italians find the one great obstacle to liberty. Despite this palpable demonstration of who and what has been the author of their country's miseries, the Italians remain blind to the lesson of Providence. They refuse to see that their enslaver is the Church ; that the chains that have bound them are the dogmas in which they still believe ; and that till the nation's soul has been disenthralled, their bodies never will be free. God has striven still farther to bring them out of slavery. Through the red gap made in the bulwarks of superstition by Solferino God introduced the Bible. That book, which for ages was proscribed,—which the eye of Italian might never see,—may now be freely bought in every part of Italy. What reception are the Italians giving it ? Are they crowding to this fountain of life, now at last unsealed ? Are they bathing their long darkened orbs in the celestial radiance of this blessed book ? Are they crying hosannahs to “ Him who cometh in the name of the Lord to save them ? ” Alas ! no. With a few, a very few exceptions, the Italians are treating the Bible as the Jews did its Author : they say, it “ hath no form or comeliness ; ” and when they see it, “ there is no beauty that ” they “ should desire ” it.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SIXTH VIAL : OR, THE PREPARATION.

WE here make a great transition : we pass from the fulfilled to the unfulfilled part of this prophecy. At this stage, accordingly, we lose the guidance of accomplished facts, and are thrown entirely upon the light of symbol and the analogy of Providence. It is here that one is most in danger of ceasing to interpret, and beginning to prophecy. Let us eschew the peril, by rigidly confining ourselves to such conclusions regarding the future as may be fully warranted by a fair exposition of the symbols before us, illumined by their Egyptian types, and by the established principles of God's procedure towards Churches and nations. The reverence that is due to God's holy Word does not require that we should here stop ; it only requires that we should proceed in a profound reliance on the Divine Spirit ; for even while this whole book was yet unfulfilled, it was said,—“Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy.”

“ And the sixth angel—(Rev. xvi. 12)—poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates ; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the

East might be prepared." Very various have been the interpretations of this vial. Many are disposed to see in the "great river Euphrates" some leading European country, whose revenues have fed the Roman see, and whose arms have defended it. Austria has been named: France, we think, is better entitled to the distinction. But we reject both countries as the "Euphrates" of the vial; for the drying up of the river is followed, not by the fall of the city, as it would have been had the city stood upon it, but by the removal of an impediment in the way of "the kings of the East." The scene of the vial is obviously not within the papal earth. The "rivers and fountains" of that earth had been smitten under the third vial; and we cannot suppose that one of these rivers,—Austria, for instance,—already turned into blood, should be singled out and smitten a second time under the sixth vial. The locality lies beyond the limits of the papal earth, though still the judgment in its issues affects the anti-Christian system, whose overthrow is the one object of all the vials. To teach us that the scene of the vial is outside the symbolic world, to which hitherto we have been confined, an eastern name is given to it: it is "the great river Euphrates." River is a symbol of established import: it denotes a nation; and the nation here symbolized by the Euphrates is, we take it, the nation inhabiting on its banks,—the Turkish power. To this interpretation we are shut up by the parallelism betwixt the trumpets and the vials. The scene of the sixth trumpet is "the great river Euphrates,"

and the only application which facts warrant of the symbol of that trumpet is to the Ottoman power; and we are bound to give the same interpretation to the same symbol, now occurring a second time under the sixth vial. "It cannot be accidental," says Hengstenberg, "that Euphrates is here mentioned under the sixth vial, as there under the sixth trumpet."

The effect produced by the vial was this: "the water thereof was dried up." How much milder is the judgment upon the great river Euphrates than upon the rivers of the papal earth! *They* were turned into blood,—*it* is dried up: that is, the Ottoman power, in both its political and idolatrous branches, is now brought to an end. The Mohammedan and papal idolatries were nearly contemporaneous in their rise, and probably they will be nearly contemporaneous in their fall.

The water of the Euphrates is dried up, "that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared." Who these "kings of the East" are has been much disputed. Some have seen in them the Jews, and have hailed their conversion as the result of this vial. Others, and, among these, interpreters of high name, as Elliot, have seen in them the eastern nations, for whose entrance into the Christian Church they regard this vial as making preparation. We dissent from all these interpretations; and for this reason, that the vials are poured out for purposes of judgment solely. They have for their direct and immediate object, not the conversion of either Jew or Gentile, but the destruc-

tion of that idolatrous confederacy which arose at the beginning of the “Seven Times,” and culminated in the anti-Christian apostacy. The vials are, in fact, the burning of the great city, whose lurid flame and dark smoke began to be seen as early as the first outbreak of the French Revolution ; while its kings, statesmen, and priests, struck with terror at the sudden collapse of what had existed in apparent stability and splendour for a thousand years, stand afar off, and, like Burke in the end of last century, and Guizot in our own day, cast dust upon their heads, and in eloquent terms cry, “Alas, alas ! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls ! for in one hour so great riches is come to nought.”

Guided by the analogy of the symbolization, we infer that these “kings of the East,” whose way the sixth vial prepares, come for purposes of destruction. Accordingly, no sooner has the Euphrates been dried up, than the kings, not of the papal earth only, but “of the whole world,” are seen hastening towards the scene of the great final conflict. The common opinion we take to be the sound one, even that the figure is borrowed from the taking of the first Babylon. Cyrus, at the head of the armies of Media and Persia, diverted the Euphrates from its bed, as the prophet had foretold, and marched into the city. But is there, it will be asked, any analogy betwixt the purpose served by the literal river to the literal Babylon, and the purpose served by the Ottoman empire to papal Europe ?

There is a very striking analogy. Blot Turkey out of the map, and you change the condition of the world. What doctrine so surely believed among statesmen as that on Turkey hangs the balance of power in Europe, and that were Turkey to be overthrown, changes of vast magnitude would instantly follow in Europe? Why did Britain and France go to the Crimea? Was it not to prevent the forcing of the barrier which walls out the North and the East? Let that barrier be thrown down, and powerful nationalities from the Danube, and unknown nations and tribes from Asia, would move down upon southern Europe, subvert its governments, and, it might be, people its lands. It is the fall of the Turkish power, and the consequent subversion of the present European system, which, so far as we can judge, is shadowed forth in the drying up of the Euphrates, and the passage of the kings across its empty bed. There is a series of prophecies in Isaiah—(chapters xli. xlvi.)—relating to a power which is to be brought forward from the East to execute God's counsel upon his enemies. Before that power rivers are to be dried up, the two-leaved gates are to be opened, the loins of kings are to be loosed, and idolatrous nations are to be given “as dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow.” The conquests of that power are to be followed by the heavens dropping from above, and the skies pouring down righteousness, and God becoming known “from the rising of the sun, and from the west.” Expositors have been much at a loss to whom to apply this pro-

phecy. Some have interpreted it of Abraham ; others of Cyrus, and the conquest of the first Babylon. Cyrus is, indeed, named in the prophecy ; but the prediction obviously has a far grander reference than to him, and contemplates changes vaster far than any consequent on the taking of the literal Babylon. The prophecy refers to events immediately preceding the Millennium, and opens out into the final deliverance of the spiritual Israel. May not the eastern kings of the sixth vial be the powers foretold in the prophecy, and which were typified by Cyrus ? It appears to point to some great irruption of nations,—some breaking loose of nationalities from the valleys of the Danube and the Euphrates, similar to that breaking loose which followed the sixth trumpet. The parallel is very striking, though we do not think it has been adverted to,—namely, that as on the sounding of the sixth trumpet “three angels” issue forth from the “Euphrates” to execute final vengeance on the apostate Eastern Church, so on the pouring out of the sixth vial “the kings” issue forth from the same quarter, most probably to assist in executing final vengeance on the apostate Western Church. At all events, if the principles of exposition which we have pursued throughout the vials be sound, we ought to look for the next convulsion in the East.

Having been shown the preparations going on outside the papal earth for the final catastrophe, we are now brought back again to the Apocalyptic scene proper. “And I saw—(verse 13)—three unclean spirits,

like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." It would seem that a short period of quiet will be given to the West, while judgment is being done upon Mohammedan idolatry. The sixth vial still continues; and the kings and nations of the papal earth, still held in "the chains of darkness," are unable to leave their places. But if arms are suspended, a fierce conflict of principles rages the while. Of the ten plagues of Egypt, three were plagues of unclean creatures. If we count the "three frogs" as three plagues, then we have ten plagues also in the papal earth, and so a very close resemblance to its prototype. Who are these frogs? They are termed "unclean spirits," and "spirits of devils." They are not unembodied spirits. When God said by Zechariah, "the *unclean spirit* will I remove out of the land," he referred undoubtedly to the false prophets. So here it is foul and diabolical principles, acting through human agencies, that are foretold. We can determine the nature of these principles by looking whence they proceed. The first swarm comes out of the mouth of the dragon. The *dragon* is the symbol of infidelity,— "that old serpent the devil." The spirit that proceeds from him is atheism. The second comes out of the mouth of the beast. The *beast* is the symbol of despotism, and the spirit thence proceeding is tyranny. The third comes out of the mouth of the false prophet. The *false prophet* is the symbol of Popery, and the spirit proceeding from the false prophet is Jesuitism.

Here for the first time is the Church of Rome called the *false prophet*,—teaching us that by this time her interest and party would be dissevered in good degree from those of the *beast*, with which in former ages she had been in close alliance. The kings by this time have begun to hate the harlot, and to make her desolate and naked. These, then, are the three parties which are to issue forth, and fill Europe with their multitudinous croaking swarms, and defile it with their filth,—atheistic revolutionists, the adherents of old tyranny, and the Jesuits. Not that now they are to have their first rise ; for the spirit of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, have been working all along ; but at this era they will receive a new development. They will begin working on a scale hitherto unknown, and with an activity and a craft such as even they never before displayed. They are termed “the spirits of devils,” because each party will be representative of a principle, and that principle a diabolical one. Their work will be to tempt ; and they will carry on their work after the fashion of Satan, their great leader and inspirer. They will organize in the darkness, and walk abroad with noiseless foot. Subtle and pervasive, they will penetrate everywhere. They will possess the ear of kings ; they will unlock the door of cabinets ; they will raise their voice in parliaments ; and, instituting a vast system of propagandism all over Europe, they will enlist every man under one or other of their banners. They are said to work miracles. The allusion is to the magicians of Egypt, who professed to

imitate the finger of God, that Pharaoh might not listen to his voice. So will these parties. They will say, "Our principles alone are true; we only are the saviours of society;" and thus will they lead kings and nations away from the healing virtue of God's Word. Their machinations will issue in the gathering together of "the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

We see these "frogs" going forth before our eyes. The three parties which at this moment agitate Europe are,—the Revolutionists, the political Re-actionaries, and the Ultramontanes. They strive together, not by arms, but by intrigues, by published manifestoes, and by secret clubs. Their name is legion. The frogs of Egypt that entered the very bed-chamber of its king, that crawled into the ovens, and defiled the kneading troughs, were not more numerous nor more filthy. Their craft is consummate, and their activity is sleepless. The political Re-actionaries are plotting the restoration of the old dynasties; the Jesuits cover papal Europe with a network of secret societies, with which the almost omniscient police of Louis Napoleon finds it difficult to cope. The Revolutionists, distrustful of kings, and yet more distrustful of priests, are equally alert. They enrol recruits and prepare arms. The Europe of this hour has, in fact, three surfaces,—a military one, a sacerdotal one, and a revolutionary one. The upper is a vast camp, in which kings are seen mustering armies, building fortresses and war-ships, and raising loans. They prepare unconsciously for the

battle of the great day. The under surface presents a busy scene of Jesuitical intrigue. At the bottom is the Revolution. Like a furnace of smouldering fire, it is burning in the darkness, ready, the moment the reaction has reached a certain pitch, to break through the surface, and engulf all in its devouring abyss.

Our era has seen the rise of a number of new papal organizations. One is lost in wonder when he thinks of the rapid growth and enormous ramifications of these societies. The Society of St Vincent de Paul was founded by eight penniless students, in the reign of Louis Philippe, and now it has attained a pitch of power that is sublime. Its agents are counted in thousands ; its members include English, Irish, Scotch, Americans, Spaniards, Portuguese, Belgians, Prussians, Austrians, Bavarians. Its conferences are spread over the world. Although only nine-and-twenty years in being, it wields the power of an empire. Its object is the suppression of Protestant liberty, and the universal supremacy of the Papal See. Another society, which has just started into being, is the "Arch-Brotherhood of St Peter in Bonds." This, too, is a secret organization. It is formed on the model of the Jesuits, and most probably at their inspiration. Its central council sits at Lyons ; its diocesan clubs ramify over all France, and will probably in no long time extend to the other papal countries, and also to Britain and America. It knows only one principle of duty,—fealty to the Pope ; it seeks only one object,—the support of the Papal See ; and in furtherance of that object all

means are lawful. It enrolls members and raises money. It has awakened the suspicion of the French Government, which has just addressed a circular on the subject to all bishops of the kingdom, characterizing the society as "usurping a sovereign part, which belongs only to the Government of France," and designing "to organize a hidden power in the very bosom of the State, and to enrol citizens in *political* enterprises, whereof the means of execution are indefinite." Thoroughly to centralize these societies, and to consolidate them into one gigantic force, covering the globe, animated by one will, and concentrating all their efforts on one great object, an assembly of all the bishops of the Catholic world has been summoned to Rome. The emperor has forbidden the attendance of the French bishops. He may prevent the holding of an œcumenical council; but can he prevent the prosecution of an œcumenical policy? Half-measures cannot now save Rome. At this hour all is menaced, and therefore all must be dared. She must risk all, that she may win all. As soon as she has made these organizations world-wide, she will strike a blow in one night over all countries, which shall sweep all her enemies at once out of existence. If this blow shall fail, Rome perishes: if it shall succeed, she reigns supreme.

The progression of the drama is stopped for a moment, and a warning voice is heard speaking,—"Behold, I come as a thief." A brief period of quiet, disturbed only by the bustling activity of the frogs,

will precede the last plague. Deceived by the calm, men will be saying, as they said before the Flood, “Peace, peace: the crisis is tided over: all things will continue as they were.” But as the thief comes in the stillest hour of night, so “I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Blessed is he who watcheth and keepeth his *principles*. It will be a time of peril: seducing spirits will be all abroad: the very air, laden with corrupt and pestilential elements, will be stupifying: blessed the man, blessed the Church, blessed the nation, who shall watch, lest, being found unfaithful when their Lord comes, they perish in the overthrow of Antichrist.

When the drama resumes, the kings and their followers are seen upon the fatal field. There are gathered the armies of the dragon, of the beast, and of the false prophet, with “the kings of the East,” who are to aid in the destruction, though probably to be themselves destroyed in the end. Thither have they been led by the frogs, but in reality by “God Almighty;” for this is his day. “I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat”—(Joel, iii. 2). The place of conflict is “called, in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.” Hengstenberg is of opinion that the locality indicated is the valley of Megiddo, in Palestine. His reason for so thinking is, that its name is given in Hebrew. For this very reason we come to just the opposite conclusion. Had the literal Megiddo been meant, we may be sure the

literal name would not have been adopted. In the Apocalypse, the names of places, nations, and Churches are symbolical throughout. The "Euphrates" of the sixth vial forms no exception, for it is the symbol of a political power. When the name of the place is given in Hebrew, we are thereby taught that the symbolic element lies in the Hebrew appellative ; in other words, that the Hebrew name is the symbol, and employed to veil, not reveal, the locality. Let us surrender ourselves to the natural teachings of the symbol. If this locality is called in Hebrew Armageddon, what is it called in ordinary language ? AR signifies mountain ; and MEGIDDO signifies, according to Grotius, *gathering*, and according to Vitringa, *destruction*. The compound word, then, signifies Mountain of Gathering, or Mountain of Destruction. The original town probably was so called from the circumstance that its neighbourhood was a place of frequent rendezvous for armies, and, of course, of frequent overthrow. We conclude, then, that the Armageddon of the prophecy has not a topographical, but a moral signification. It simply denotes the destined Mountain of Gathering and of Destruction, wherever it may be ; and we are left to determine on other grounds the scene of this final assembling and overthrow. We beg to suggest whether the name Armageddon does not refer back to chapter fourteenth, where the same "battle of that great day of God Almighty" is symbolized by the vintage. An angel appears having a sharp sickle ; he gathers the clusters of the vine of the earth, and casts

them into the wine-press, where they are trodden. Here is a great *gathering* and *treading*, and in reference to this the place has its name Armageddon.

Still it may be permitted us to ask, where are we to look for this locality? Elliot places it on the "mountains of Israel." We are not satisfied that his grounds for so doing are conclusive. The prophets, all of whom have spoken of this great overthrow, indicate its scene by various names,—all, of course, symbolic. The "day of Jezreel," the "valley of Jephoshaphat," the "land of Idumea," "Babylon," have all been employed to indicate this fated spot. We are much disposed to be guided by the words of our Lord,—"wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." The carcase is the corrupt political and ecclesiastical confederacies of the Roman earth. Where the vine grew, there naturally would we expect its grapes to be gathered and trodden. This points to papal Europe, and more particularly to Italy. The spirit of the symbol is to be gathered, we are satisfied, from the seventy-third Psalm. This psalm manifestly shadows forth the "tumult" and "confederacies" of the "time of the end." The whole surrounding heathen nations have combined against the Church, and have "taken crafty counsel," by one sweeping blow to "cut her off," and make her memorial perish from the earth. In the prospect of that critical day, the Church is taught to pray that God would confound the plots of her enemies, and break their arms, as of old he overthrew the terrible confederacy under Sisera and Jabin,

on the plain of Megiddo, beside the Kishon. "They became as dung for the earth." Now is come the great final Armageddon, of which the first was but a type: not because it is to be enacted on the same spot, but because it is to be preceded by a like crafty plot, and a like universal combination, and because it will end in a like sudden, irresistible, and irretrievable overthrow. God will "make them like a wheel, as the stubble before the wind." He will "persecute them with his tempest, and make them afraid with his storm." As the result, those that survive the great slaughter will "seek his face," and men shall know that Jehovah "is the Most High over all the earth." Borrowing the imagery from the fatal field of the first Armageddon, the psalmist displays to the Church's eye a yet more terrible Armageddon,—that field even on which the great leader of all the armies which have warred against the Church,—"that old serpent, the devil,"—shall be bound in chains, and cast into the abyss, and so the war itself be conclusively ended. But on the Latin earth are we disposed to place the scene of his last overthrow; and it certainly is confirmatory of our view, that the Warrior, "red in his apparel," who treads "the wine-press" on the "day of vengeance,"—the Armageddon of the Apocalypse,—is seen by Isaiah returning, not from Palestine, but from Edom, the symbol of the papal earth.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ IT IS DONE.”

WE are now arrived at the end of a drama which began twenty-five centuries ago. But the last act of the great tragedy is shown to us “darkly, and through a glass.” A terrible shadow, as of an awful doom, is before us ; but, as said Job of the spirit that passed before him at midnight, we cannot “discern the form thereof.” “And the seventh angel—(ver. 17)—poured out his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, It is done.” This great voice is that of God. It sounds throughout the Church and the world in a dispensation so striking as to make it manifest to all that now Satan’s kingdom has fallen to rise no more. This voice is the complement of Christ’s words upon the cross, “It is finished.” The voice from the cross announced that Satan’s kingdom was *virtually* overthrown, inasmuch as sin had been expiated. The voice from the throne announces that now Satan’s kingdom is *actually* overthrown. On the cross the days of that kingdom were numbered, and sentence went forth that at the end of these days it should be destroyed. Now

“ It is done ;” it is swept from the earth ; and one brief, sharp, trumpet-like utterance (*γεγονε*) announces it to the universe. This, truly, is the great trumpet of Jubilee. It announces that God’s indignation is now at an end ; for in the seven vials was filled up the wrath of God, and now the last of them has been poured out. The curse under which the world had groaned during the seven times is removed ; and that great era of redemption, which all former eras had typified, is now come. “ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad ; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof, before the Lord ; for He cometh : He cometh to judge the earth : He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.”

The seventh vial is poured into the air. In the air begin all those influences and changes which affect the lower world ; it is therefore a fit symbol of public opinion, which, when sufficiently powerful, sets up or abolishes what laws, institutions, and government it will. Under this vial some vast, radical, and, it may be, violent change in the general mind of Europe may be expected to show itself. The change will be so powerful as instantaneously to alter the face of society. The first effect of the vial is seen in the outbreak of terrific storms. “ And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings ; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.” These are the well-known symbols of demonstrations, insurrections, tumults, and fightings. They foreshadow the

uprising of all the various nationalities, and the breaking loose of all peoples from law and government. The insurrections of 1848 presented a picture on a small scale of what the seventh vial will be on a great. These initiatory tumults will issue in a general and unprecedented revolution, "such as was not since men were upon the earth." This is not a new revolution : it is the earthquake of the Seventh Trumpet consummated. Its first shock was felt at the breaking out of the French Revolution : repeatedly since has it rocked the papal earth : now it shakes it for the last time, and buries in remediless ruin those political and ecclesiastical edifices which former throes of the mighty earthquake had left shattered and tottering.

"Still farther are the effects of this great earthquake. "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." We start back from what the symbol seems most surely to portend. Must every landmark be blotted out ? Must every state and kingdom in the Roman earth sink and disappear in this sea of revolution ? Must every throne be brought to the dust ? Must the laws, dynasties, and forms of government which have constituted the Europe of the past two thousand years be as completely abrogated as if they had never been ? This is what the symbol predicts, if we read it aright. This indeed is a great earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth." It is the fall of the old heavens and the old earth.

One terrible concomitant of the earthquake is spe-

cially noted. "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven; every stone about the weight of a talent." This foreshadows a war waged with missiles of a size altogether unprecedented. The talent weighed between fifty and sixty pounds; and every hailstone in this tremendous storm was of a talent's weight. The hail must be regarded as slaying all on whom it fell. Our recent improvements in the instruments of warfare, whereby their size and destructive effect are prodigiously increased, are significant, viewed in this connection. Mr Elliot suggests France as the quarter whence this symbolic hail may issue. We are rather disposed to look for it in the same quarter from which the hail of the trumpets came; that is, the north-east of Europe. It is here, we think, that the remarkable prophecy of Ezekiel in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of his book has its place. The prophet shows us a great gathering of the eastern and northern nations. The numerous and warlike tribes inhabiting the land of Magog are to be mustered under a leader, and "ascend and come like a storm," they, and all their bands, and many people with them. Magog, one of the sons of Japheth, was the father of the Scythian nations. He peopled the lands which are now mostly governed by Russia. The leader in this hostile invasion is styled "Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." He is joined by Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia, Gomer and all his bands, Togarmah of the north quarters and all his bands, and many people. This great invasion is predicted "in the latter days;" that is,

the time of the end. It is to precede the Times of Blessedness ; for, as the result of the overthrow of this great host, God's holy name is to be known in the midst of his people Israel, and the heathen are to know that he is the Lord. We have already thrown out the suggestion whether these nations are not the "kings of the East," to whom the fall of the Ottoman empire will open the gates of the West. The divided and helpless condition of Europe may provoke to this invasion ; the spread of revolutionary principles, and the wealth of the western world, may still farther excite to some great scheme of conquest or colonization. But whatever the motives on the human side, it is God who brings them on the scene, that they may assist in the overthrow of the anti-Christian confederacy, and be themselves overthrown in the end. They are represented as beaten back by a western nation, and as becoming the objects of some sudden and extraordinary display of vengeance on the part of God ; and, having rained their own hail upon the men of the papal earth, they themselves are destroyed by "an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone."

It is added, "and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail." The beast, with all his confederates and supporters, like Pharaoh, dies impenitent. Bengel has well remarked, that this is now the third time that it is said that "men blasphemed God ;" but this time it is said with a difference. On the two former occasions it was added, "and they repented not ;" but now that addition is wanting, because space

for repentance was no more to them. They were slain by the hail, and died blaspheming.

We now return. In the centre of this cloud of judgment and fire is wrapt up the doom of Babylon. These voices, lightnings, and hail storms are but the concomitants of that special and awful punishment which is reserved for the arch-rebel in this rebellious host. The immediate preparative for the infliction of the final stroke upon the apostate Church is the tripartition of the great city. “And the great city was divided into three parts.” We have already seen the “three frogs” go forth on their mission: here is the result of their enterprise. Under a separate banner had each gone forth. One had marched under “Despotism,” another under “Popery,” and a third under “Revolution.” All the men of the papal earth had they rallied to one or other of these standards; and now the Roman world is seen arranged in three camps. Already we can trace these three parties, but a little time will more distinctly define them. There are the champions of the old *regime*, namely, spiritual and secular tyranny in one. Of these, the kings of Austria and Spain, together with the Pope, may be regarded as the representatives. There is the party for the spiritual papacy, pure and simple, headed by Victor Emmanuel, and, though doubtfully, by the Emperor of the French. And there are the Revolutionists, led by Mazzini and Garibaldi. Fain would Italy advance, but she fears the sword of Austria. Austria and Spain would strike, but they are withheld by the power of

Piedmont and France. Garibaldi, too, is impatient to summon his followers to arms, but he hesitates to plunge Italy into a strife from which she might emerge victorious, but in which also it is possible she might be dragged down into an abyss of ruin. Darkness,—darkness that may be felt,—restrains all parties. But the hour comes when they must advance, be the perils and risks ever so tremendous. Every day that elapses is a gain to despotism and a loss to the revolution. The latter must at no distant period measure its strength with the re-action. And then, as in the early types, where the Church's enemies, smitten with mysterious panic, turned their swords against each other, we shall see the dragon's host, gathered on its last battle-field, become the executioner of God's righteous vengeance upon itself.

“ And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” Was it only now that God remembered great Babylon? Plague after plague had He poured upon the kingdom of the beast. Its earth, its sea, its rivers, its sun,—all had been smitten. Yet now only is it said, “ great Babylon came in remembrance,” as if till this moment God had been unconscious of her existence. Now he remembers her with an energy and a terror of judgment which makes all past calamities be forgotten. Let us mark the name here given her,—“ Great Babylon.” This was her first name. Under this name she began to persecute twenty-five centuries ago. Since then, how often had

she changed her name and her country, as if thereby she could shake off her guilt; but now, in this supreme hour, her Judge confronts her with her old name, and recalls thereby to her memory the long ages of crime for which she now must reckon. There is no question touching the identity of idolatry with God. He finds the paganism of early Babylon in the existing Church of Rome, and visits upon her the blood shed by her predecessors. But farther, the name has respect to Rome especially in her ecclesiastical character. It is the same name which we read upon the forehead of the harlot, when she is shown to us sitting upon the scarlet-coloured beast. It indicates that the judgment has now come very near to her as a Church, and that the cup in the Judge's hand is specially her cup.

The symbolic figuring of the last plague is purposely vague. The silence of Scripture is sometimes more emphatic than any express intimation could have been. No name, no form even, is given to the last awful judgment of Rome; and yet it is announced in a way to make the ears of every man who hears it to tingle. There is a heaping of term upon term in the one brief sentence that describes this doom. It is the cup of his wrath; nay, more, it is the cup of the wine of his wrath; nay, it is something more terrible still,—it is the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Thus does the judgment rise stage on stage to its terrible climax. It breaks like the crash of the thunder upon the ear. It is the vengeance, the undiluted and accumulated vengeance, of the ever-living and omnipo-

tent God. What that may be, the day only will declare. Meanwhile, all that we can know of the last judgment of Rome we must be content to learn from its ancient type.

We have traced all throughout the vials a close analogy betwixt them and the ten plagues of Egypt. This analogy has enabled us to look deeper into the symbol, and to realize in more definite form the judgment portrayed under each, than otherwise we should have been able to do. We are justified in applying this principle of interpretation to the seventh vial, yet unfulfilled. We have already seen, not, indeed, that vial itself, but its image or type, in the tenth Egyptian plague. Founding on that analogy, we deduce two very important conclusions respecting the seventh vial. The first is, that the hand of God will be specially visible in it. We do not mean that it will be accomplished by preternatural or miraculous agency ; but God's providence will be more immediately and strikingly displayed in the seventh vial than in any of the preceding six. The first nine plagues were inflicted through the instrumentality of Moses. He stretched his rod over the river, and it became blood ; he lifted it towards heaven, and the storm of mingled hail and fire burst out ; again he lifted it upwards, and darkness covered the land. But when the tenth plague was to be inflicted, let us mark what happens. Moses is withdrawn, and God himself descends, and is present upon the scene. It is not the servant, but the Master, who strikes the last blow. "Thus saith the Lord,

about midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt." And a second time it is said, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night." The lesson is repeated in the case of Babylon. Her last punishment is styled "the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple;" just as the angels who pour out the last plagues are said to come out of the temple, and the great voice announcing "It is done," sounds from the temple. And emphatically was it said of Babylon, as of Egypt, "I will stretch out my hand upon them." And so once again, in the last overthrow of that great city which spiritually is called Egypt and Babylon. The angels pour out the vials, and retire. A greater occupies the scene, even God himself. It is his Voice that is heard calling on great Babylon to stand up; and it is his Hand that is seen giving to her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. A blow so sudden and so tremendous all will acknowledge God only could have inflicted.

But farther, guiding ourselves by the analogy, we are led to infer that the last blow will fall principally, though not exclusively, upon the priesthood of Rome. The tenth and last plague fell upon the first-born of the Egyptians. Among early nations, the first-born were priests, and were consecrated to the service of the gods. The first-born of Israel were accounted holy, and, being liable to serve at the altar, had to be redeemed. It is true that a sacerdotal caste had arisen in Egypt, and the first-born of the general community did not discharge the functions of priesthood. Still,

the original and wider meanings of the word connect the first-born with the priesthood. Still farther to indicate the connection of the plague with the priesthood, the first-born of cattle, which were the sacred animals of the Egyptians, were smitten ; and it was expressly added, "against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment." The analogy of the last plague, then, points with ominous significance to the priesthood of Rome as the most prominent sufferers under the seventh vial. The order of the vials leads to the same conclusion. We have seen the *men*, the *nations*, the *kings*, of the papal earth smitten in succession. There remains but the priesthood. There would seem to await papal Europe a night of terror, like that which closed the history of Egypt, in which God will pass through the land, and all the first-born of Rome shall die. Out of midnight darkness shall leap the last calamity. A great and comprehensive blow, hatched in deepest secrecy, and inflicted by an unseen hand, will terminate the existence and the crimes of Rome together. So much the type seems to teach. "Evil came upon" Egypt and Babylon, and neither "knew whence it came." "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou also art taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware."

When last seen, the Babylon of the Apocalypse is sinking in a shoreless sea of revolution. Twice over had this fate been typified of her ; first in Pharaoh and his host, who "sank as lead in the mighty waters ;" and next in the literal Babylon, upon which "the sea came up ; she was covered with the multitude of the

waves thereof.” To this was added a symbolical act of special significance, which pointed forward, we are disposed to think, to the sixth vial. Jeremiah having finished his denunciation against Babylon, wrote it in a book, and gave it to Seraiah, who carried it to Babylon, bound it to a stone, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, saying, “Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.” The act represented the drowning of Babylon in the literal Euphrates; and may it not have looked forward to the drowning of great Babylon in the symbolic Euphrates? For what do the last symbols of the Apocalypse represent? The Euphrates dried up, and the nationalities of the East rushing down upon Rome; while around her are the kingdoms of the West, utterly broken up, and become one wide tumultuous sea of revolution. Amid the conflicting tides and surging billows of this sea Babylon finds a grave. “And a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

Not one, but three symbols, are employed to shadow forth the final doom of Rome,—a raging sea, a field of slaughter, a burning pit. To these is added a fourth, shadowy and awful, which the eye cannot fix, farther than Egypt’s last night bodes it forth. A shape, undefined and terrible, at God’s command suddenly rises from beneath, spreads its dark wing over her, and Rome is seen no more.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH.

WE are unwilling that the curtain should drop with the scenes we have just witnessed. These are too deeply tragic to make it desirable that they should be the last on which our eye should rest. Besides, were we to stop here, we should fail to see the unity and grandeur of God's whole plan as regards our family on earth. And, happily, we have only to go a little way forward, to see the light beginning to spring up behind the dark cloud, and to hear the chariot-wheels of Emmanuel, which now tarry not. There has been a great rending of fetters and an opening of prison-doors; and now the liberated nations begin to cry Hosannah. "And after these things—(Rev. xix. 1)—I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia, salvation, and honour, and glory, and power, unto the Lord our God."

"After these things,"—that is, after the pouring out of the vials, after the burning of the great city,—some little time will pass away after the final overthrow of Antichrist, before the millennial day shall open out into its meridian splendour. Let us trust

that this transition period will not be long. Already has that day dawned. The various evangelistic enterprises of our era, the political and social ameliorations of our age, are just so many streaks of light in the east ; but when once the last vial has been poured out, these silvery lines will broaden into day. Before the pouring out of the vials, we saw the temple in heaven opened ; but, filled as it was with the smoke of judgment, no man was able to enter into it. But how different is it now ! Nations are crowding within its open portals ; the work of conversion goes rapidly forward ; the great let has been removed ; the Spirit has been shed down ; and the roof of that temple, silent till now, resounds with the triumphant shouts of nations who have found safety and freedom within it. In that shout you hear the old Hebrew voice, " Alleluia ;" for, as Elliot has remarked, with a discrimination which will be most appreciated by those who have been most accustomed to study the significancy and delicacy of the Apocalyptic symbols, the word is a Hebrew one, and occurs here for the first time in this book ; showing that now the Jews have entered the Church, and Jew and Gentile unite their voices in singing their common anthem over the fall of their common oppressor. Deep as the voice of ocean, loud as the thunder of heaven, but melodious as the sound of many waters, rises this great shout, " Alleluia, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God."

" Alleluia" is properly the song of Moses. It occurs several times in the anthem sung on the shore of the

Red Sea, there translated “Praise ye the Lord.” On that shore stood only the Old Testament Church ; but on this stand both Churches. The song of the Lamb, therefore, rises in unison with the song of Moses ; and the time of meeting is evidently soon after the fall of Antichrist ; for, while this is the event which they celebrate, they speak of it as recent. “ For true and righteous are his judgments ; for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia.” Then comes “ the marriage of the Lamb,” which represents the conversion and union of all the nations of the world to Christ, their one Lord and Saviour. This event is brought before us under an ampler symbolization in the twenty-first and twenty-second chapters of the Apocalypse, to which we now turn.

“ And I saw,” says John, “ a new heaven and a new earth, . . . coming down from God out of heaven.” And John runs on to the end of the book, in a style of glowing and gorgeous imagery, which surpasses in its golden magnificence anything which man’s pen ever before wrote, or man’s tongue ever before uttered. So supremely and ineffably blessed is the scene he depicts, that it is not wonderful it should have been taken for a symbolic representation of heaven. Led by John, we do seem to have entered within the everlasting gates, and to walk in a world on which there rests the light of immortality. And yet, no. John does not carry us to heaven : the “ new heavens and the new

earth" come down out of heaven to us. Transcendent in glory as his picture is, it is a picture of what is yet to be realized on earth. It exhibits the happy and peaceful state of both Church and State, when the curse of idolatry shall have been purged out, and Satan shall have been bound with a great chain, and shut up in the pit, that he may deceive the nations no more.

In short, John in these closing visions presents to us the symbolic fulfilment of what Isaiah and other prophets had long before foretold. "Behold," said God by Isaiah—(chap. lxv. 17, 18)—"I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." And again—(chap. li. 16)—"And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, thou art my people." It is no material fabric which is here foretold, but a new social edifice, free from the venom of idolatry and the seeds of revolution, which has been slowly rising through the instrumentality of God's witnesses, into whose mouth he has "put his words," and whom he has "covered in the shadow" of his hand for that very end. Of this new era, so stable in its principles, so perfect in its constitution, and so unlike all that went before it that it can be fittingly symbolized only by a "creation," have all the prophets spoken. It is, indeed, their one great theme; and never

is their eye turned, though only for a moment, towards it, but their words grow too big for utterance, and their predictions swell into a depth and grandeur of meaning which we, who have known only a state of things, alas, how different! can most inadequately apprehend. They seem to us words which it is scarce lawful for a man to utter, at least regarding a state of things to be realized on earth. The writers in the New Testament foretell this era in imagery less gorgeous, but in terms equally significant. Our Lord calls it the "regeneration ;" Peter, in his sermon, "the times of restitution of all things ;" Paul, "the world to come ;" Peter, in his epistle, "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness ;" and John, coming last, bearing his testimony to the truth of all which God had spoken on this head "by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began," says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth."

The scene of this "new heaven and new earth" is on earth. It is a state of society altogether new,—wholly righteous in its principles, and only blessed in its workings. "Behold, I make all things new." Doubtless, one can here see, and it is meant he should, as in a mirror, a yet more glorious earth and heavens lying afar off; but the object put before us by John in his vision, immediately and directly, is a state of existence to be enjoyed by man on earth, and on this side the final judgment.

Let us mark how this puts the crown upon God's providence. The object contemplated from the first

in the creation of man and the world is accomplished, and accomplished here, and on this same earth, on which it appeared to have been utterly wrecked. Paradise rises again ; holy man, nay, holy nations, dwell in it ; and God returns to it. Viewed thus, Providence is no plan broken off, abandoned, and begun anew on some other scene : it is a plan completed and crowned on the very spot where it had its initiative. The history of our race opens out into the unity and grandeur of an epic. Victory remains with God.

Let us mark, too, the unity this gives to the Bible. As there is a paradise upon its first page, so there is a paradise upon its last. Betwixt the two is a journey of six thousand years. That journey has been gone by man in tears, in toil, in blood ; but look where it lands him,—on the threshold even of a fairer paradise than that which he left. And what does this teach us ? Why, this, that God's design in all the terrible dispensations of these six thousand years has just been to recover paradise. When Satan saw man driven out, and the door of his first garden closed behind him, and the burning sword planted there to forbid his return, Ah ! he thought, now man is undone for ever ; now God's design in creating him is effectually and eternally marred. But, no ! God takes man by the hand, leads him away from his lost paradise, points his steps towards a better, though yet afar off, and enables him age after age perceptibly to near it, and at last to reach its portals. Thus history is seen ending in a grand return of the nations to their home.

This is but another illustration of the principle we announced at the outset, and which we have kept in eye all throughout, even that there is a typology underlying all things, in virtue of which the consummation is seen a long way ere it is reached. Thus man at the beginning of time saw the image of that grand consummation in which time shall end. His first earthly garden was the image of his final earthly home, as that final home is, on the same principle, the image of a home yet more glorious beyond the grave. And therefore it is that, when we come to the end of the Bible, we find ourselves in presence of those very scenes amid which the Bible opens, only now they are more stupendous in scale and more transcendent in glory. The former "had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth." There is a paradise before our race, as well as behind.

There is again a CREATION. "And I saw," says John, "a new heaven and a new earth." The old heavens and earth have been burned with the fire of the vials. An entirely new order of society, political and social, now emerges. The principles of truth and justice, as revealed in the Bible, again become paramount, and govern all the relations of society and all the actions of men. Righteousness looks down from the heaven of the State, and peace flourishes out of the earth of the people. It is added, "There was no more sea,"—no more Apocalyptic sea, to wit, out of which the beast, Satan's embodiment, arose. There is now an end of those despotisms which had scourged the

world, alternating with those cycles of revolution which had ceaselessly overturned and confounded it. From this time shall date the true era of stability and progress. Hitherto the world has been in a state of continual flux. Empire has succeeded empire, as wave follows wave; but a great voice will now say to the principles of revolution and anarchy, "Peace, be still," and there will be a "great calm." In the history of all nations, the night of barbarism has uniformly succeeded the day of civilization. Nations hitherto have found it impossible to climb beyond a certain point, or retain their power beyond a certain period; but this ceaseless rising and falling of nations shall yet find its end. The dominion of the Son of Man "is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever."

In this "new heaven and new earth" there is again a paradise. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." This is no literal city visibly descending from the clouds: it is something far better. It is a Church apostolic in its constitution, scriptural in its doctrine, holy in its membership, and gloriously beatified by the presence of God. It is said to come down out of heaven, to intimate that it is founded on heavenly principles; for every holy principle and every good gift cometh down from God. The Churches and States of the Millennium will come out of the Bible; and as

the Bible came down from God, so the Churches and States founded upon it may be said also to come down from God. The antithesis respects those idolatrous Churches and despotic States which obtained during the Seven Times. Did they come down from heaven? No; they arose out of the abyss: they were the creation of statecraft and priestcraft. In opposition to these, we look for a Church not carved and fashioned by the axes and hammers of the State, but rising, as the temple of old, or as creation at first arose, in majestic and heavenly beauty, under the silent but omnipotent energy of God's Word, which is the gospel, —“A city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

The second garden, as regards its arrangements, is like the first, the points of difference but enhancing its blessedness. It is not less remarkable for what it wants than for what it possesses. In it “there shall be no more curse.” It was the serpent who brought in the curse. That curse corrupted the whole nature of man, disordered the whole course of society, and vitiated the very elements of nature. But the long war of which the Bible is the record has now ended in the expulsion of the serpent; and with him the long train of evils which he introduced has been purged out. A healing virtue will at this era descend on man, and from man will diffuse itself throughout all nature, restoring it to its primeval order. Governments will become paternal; oppression will cease; peace will beat the sword into the ploughshare; and the earth, re-

claimed from barrenness and waste, will ripen her harvests beneath skies in which tempest shall no longer rage, nor the deadly pestilence lurk. The "regeneration" of creation will be as real, according to its nature, as the "regeneration" of man. The same word is employed to designate both. When man rebelled against God, by a just retribution nature rebelled against man. The earth under his foot became barren; the air around him, infected by the burning deserts and the poisonous marshes of earth, became the abode of plague and tempest; the very beasts of the field proclaimed war against him. But his lost dominion will be again restored to man. Partly as the result of the Divine blessing revoking the primeval curse of barrenness, and partly as the result of man's own skill and of his knowledge of science, he will again become the lord of this lower world. On the day when man shall resume his crown of sovereignty, nature will put on her robes of beauty. "Creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. " For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." "In that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field."

This expulsion of the curse and regeneration of nature is said to stand related to the reign of God. "There shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it." In the prophecies of the Bible, all the blessings of the latter day are bound up with the reign of the "righteous King." They all

centre in Christ, and flow out of him. And so, too, the dim pointings of heathendom, the central figure in whose golden age to come was a great and righteous king. Satan's throne had stood in the world ever since the Fall ; and the earth refused her riches to Satan the usurper, and to man the rebel. Now is set up the throne of God and the Lamb : " Then shall the earth yield her increase."

" There shall be no more death." Without this, man's redemption were incomplete, or, rather, it would have altogether failed. But in the Bible, that is sometimes spoken of as done in *effect* which is done only in *principle* ; and a state initiated is sometimes described as a state consummated. It was in the first garden that the sentence of death smote man ; in the second garden that sentence will be lifted off. Though man did not immediately die corporally, he was dead. In like manner, though man must still pass through the tomb, he dieth no more. Death as the curse is abolished. In the first garden that covenant was revealed which had death for its penalty ; in the second, that covenant reigns which knows no penalty, which draws after it only life. Death in a sense will be no death, so clearly will the life beyond be realized. " Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light."

" There shall be no night there." The night of the Seven Times, with its " sorrow," " crying," and " tears," shall never return. God's presence and power will not be withdrawn ; and the world, therefore, will fall no more under Satan's dominion, or the darkness of ido-

latry. “I saw no temple there.” There will be no Ceremonial Institute, such as existed in the Jewish Church. There will be no need of type or symbol to shadow forth the great salvation ; for that salvation will be clearly seen in its own light,—that light flowing directly from its blessed fountain in the Bible. “They need no candle, nor light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light.”

The gate is again opened ;—not the gate of the old paradise : man has forgotten it ; he has no wish to return to it ; he is on the threshold of the new paradise : “The gates of it shall not be shut at all.”

In this paradise there is a river of the water of life. The first paradise was watered by a river : so is the second. The first river “went out of Eden :” this proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb. It has its deep source in God’s eternal and sovereign purpose of grace, and in Christ’s work of mediation. It is the water of life, which therefore goes forth to counteract the curse, which is *death*. It is clear as crystal,—truth unmixed. What is this river ? It is the blessed gospel. There is not a moral desert on the earth through which that river will not flow, and which it shall not change into a garden. It will flow through the papal desert, and make it a garden ; it will flow through the Mohammedan desert, and make it a garden ; it will flow through the Hindu desert, and India shall become a paradise. Through the waste-howling wilderness of China and Japan shall this river roll its life-giving waves, and these lands shall burst into ver-

dure and beauty, into joy and singing. To the very ends of the earth shall this river go forth, transforming it from pole to pole into a paradise.

In this paradise there is a tree of life. In the first paradise was there a tree of life; and so in the second. But now the interdict which forbade man access to the first tree has no existence in regard to the second. It stands here, that all may pluck and eat. What is this tree? The tree of life is just the book of life, —the book of life translated into every tongue, and opened to every eye. In the latter day this tree will uprear its mighty stem, and stretch its mighty boughs to the very ends of the earth, and will drop its doctrines, its precepts, its promises, upon the nations beneath; for “the leaves of this tree were for the healing of the nations.” Twelve manner of fruits does the tree bear. Twelve comprehended the whole nation of Israel, as arranged in twelve tribes. Twelve here comprehends the whole human family, and so intimates the perfect adaptability of the Bible to all the nations of the world. The balsamic virtue which is destined to heal the deep woes and staunch the bleeding wounds of the nations, long torn and oppressed by idolatry and tyranny, are just the truths of God’s blessed Word.

The last and crowning glory of the new paradise is, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them.” The city seen by Ezekiel, and described in the close of his prophecy, had for its name, “The Lord is there.” Here is the city. God was in

the first garden. He came down and talked with Adam. But when Adam sinned, God came no more. For six thousand years he has been a stranger in our world. Fallen man could not bear the sound of his footsteps : they would be the trump of doom to him. But the day is coming when God will return,—when he will pitch his tabernacle in the midst of us, and give us cause to say that now “God is with men.” We do look for the advent, not, indeed, of the second person of the Godhead, but of the third person of the Godhead. We “wait for the promise of the Spirit.” God the Father came to announce the plan of redemption ; God the Son came to execute it ; God the Spirit will come to apply it. And in the revivals which we see or hear of in various lands, what have we ? In these we hear the first echoes of God’s returning steps coming down out of these heavens, that, by an effusion of his Spirit, surpassing all that has gone before, he may give us reason to say, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people.”

16/4/16

THE END.